



OBJECTIVE DESTROYED



1/-

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OBJECTIVE DESTROYED



THE NIGHT SKY OVER HOSTILE GERMANY WAS CRACKED OPEN BY EXPLODING LIGHT. TENSE-FINGERED GUNNERS HAD HEARD THE DRONE OF ENGINES OVERHEAD CHANGE SUDDENLY TO A VICIOUS WHINE. AS AN AIRCRAFT HEELED OVER IN A FULL-THROTTLED POWER DIVE ...

THE AIRCRAFT WAS A MOSQUITO OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE. FLUNG EARTHWARD AT OVER 400 MPH BY ITS TWO ROLLS-ROYCE MERLIN ENGINES, IT POINTED LIKE A DEADLY FINGER AT THE TARGET BELOW. THIS, THE FEARFUL GERMANS KNEW, WAS THE JOB OF THE **FAST-FLYING PATHFINDERS!**

Chapter 1. **PATHFINDER ACE**



THE PATHFINDER FORCE OF MOSQUITOES HAD BEEN FORMED IN 1941 TO MARK TARGETS BY DROPPING BRIGHT INCENDIARY BOMBS WHICH THE BOMBER PILOTS COULD AIM AT. ONLY CRACK PILOTS WERE GIVEN THIS VITAL TASK, AND ONE OF THEM WAS SQUADRON LEADER MIKE DIAMOND...

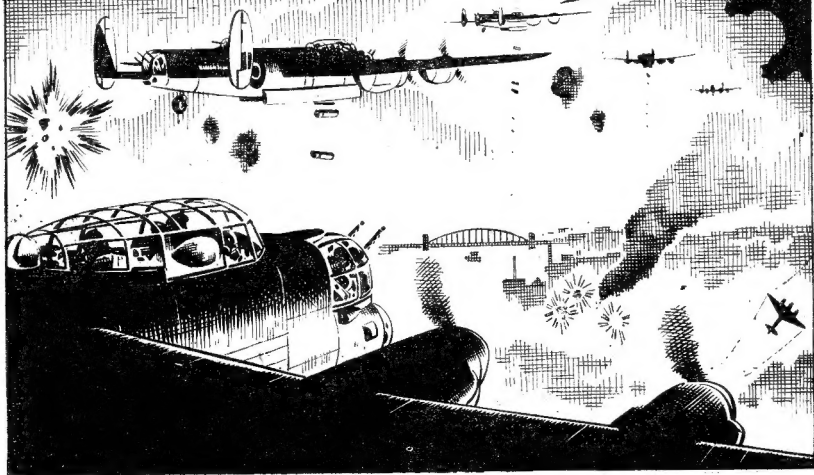


AT THE SHOUT FROM TOBY JUGG, HIS BOMB-AIMER, MICK SENT THE MOSQUITO ROCKETING UPWARDS IN A VIOLENT CLIMBING TURN. WITH MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED SORTIES IN HIS LOG AND THE DFC AND BAR ON HIS BROAD CHEST, MICK DIAMOND KNEW THE DANGER OF FLAK.



SHELLBURSTS ROCKED THE MOSQUITO AS IT FOUGHT FOR HEIGHT. BUT ITS JOB HAD TO BE DONE. FAR ABOVE, THE FOUR-ENGINE LANCASTERS MOVED PONDEROUSLY IN, AND THEIR BOMB-AIMERS SAW THE SHARP FIRES OF THE MARKERS ON THE FACTORY ROOFS BELOW.

GOOD OLD MICK!
HE'S PUT HIS FINGER
ON THE TARGET FOR
US AGAIN!



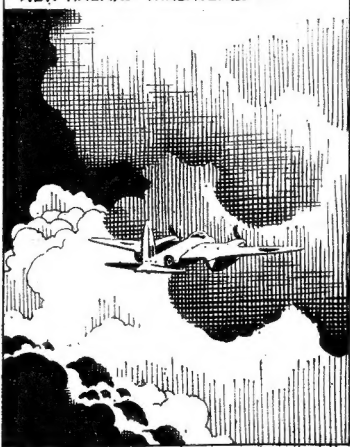
AS MICK LEVELLED OUT THE MOSQUITO AT 15,000 FEET, FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT JUGG ANXIOUSLY TESTED THE RADIO SET. HIS FACE WAS GRIM...

THE RADIO'S GONE DUFF, SIR! THE FLAK MUST HAVE PRANGED IT! WE SHAN'T BE ABLE TO GET A HOMING SIGNAL FROM BASE NOW!

NEVER MIND, TOBY! THIS IS A CHANCE FOR YOU TO BRUSH UP YOUR NAVIGATION. GIVE ME A COURSE FOR ENGLAND!



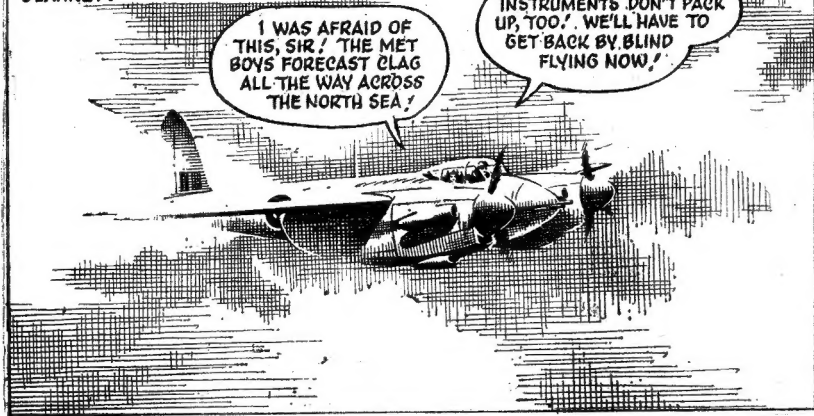
VIRIOUS ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE HAD PUT THE RADIO OUT OF ACTION. ALONE IN THE DARK AND HOSTILE SKY, THE MOSQUITO WOULD BE UNABLE TO GET A COURSE FOR HOME FROM THE CONTROLLER. FAR AWAY IN ENGLAND. AND NOW A NEW HAZARD THREATENED...



CLOUD! THICK, CLAMMY, BLINDING CLOUD WRAPPED THE MOSQUITO IN A GHOSTLY BLANKET.

I WAS AFRAID OF THIS, SIR! THE MET BOYS FORECAST CLAG ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE NORTH SEA!

LET'S HOPE THE INSTRUMENTS DON'T PACK UP, TOO! WE'LL HAVE TO GET BACK BY BLIND FLYING NOW!

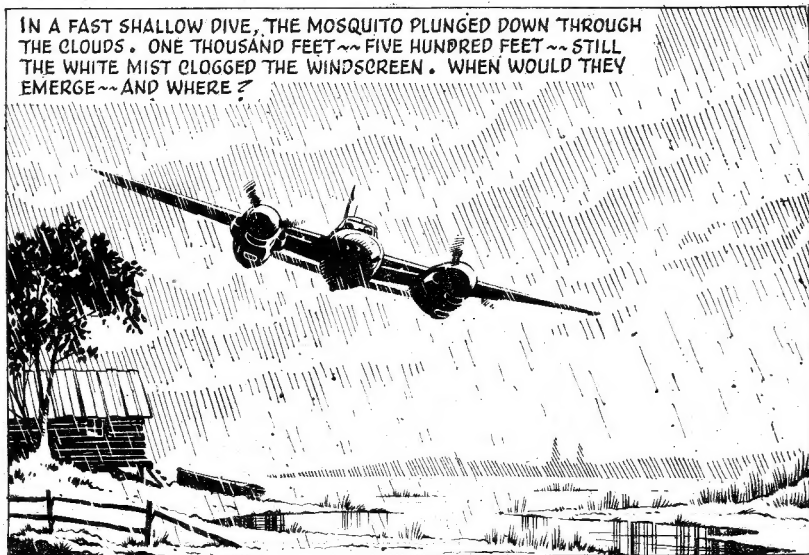


FOR LONG HOURS, THE LITTLE AIRCRAFT BORED THROUGH THAT WHITE WORLD, CUT OFF FROM THE INVISIBLE EARTH. FLYING BLIND, WITH ONLY FLAK-SHAKEN INSTRUMENTS TO SERVE HIM AS EYES, MICK DIAMOND AT LAST COOLLY BROKE THE SILENCE ...

IF YOUR NAVIGATION'S OKAY, TOBY, WE SHOULD BE OVER YARMOUTH NOW. I'M PUTTING HER DOWN ON THE DECK TO HAVE A LOOK-SEE!



IN A FAST SHALLOW DIVE, THE MOSQUITO PLUNGED DOWN THROUGH THE CLOUDS. ONE THOUSAND FEET~~FIVE HUNDRED FEET~~STILL THE WHITE MIST CLOGGED THE WINDSCREEN. WHEN WOULD THEY EMERGE~~AND WHERE?



AT LESS THAN TWO HUNDRED FEET THE AIRCRAFT BROKE THROUGH INTO THE GREY DRIZZLE OF A WINTER DAWN OVER THE FLAT FENS OF EASTERN ENGLAND. THEY HAD MADE THEIR LANDFALL, BUT DANGER WAS NOT YET PAST.

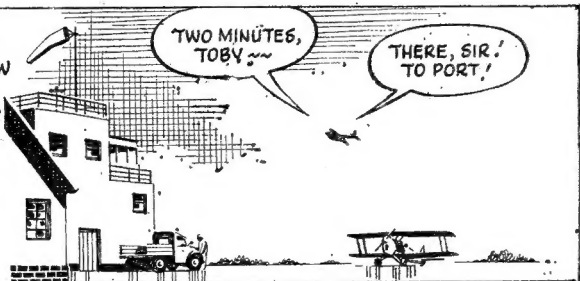
LOOKS LIKE EAST ANGLIA ALL RIGHT, BUT IT'S ANYBODY'S GUESS WHERE THE STATION IS! WE'VE GOT JUICE FOR TEN MINUTES FLYING, TOBY BOY, SO KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR AN AIRFIELD.



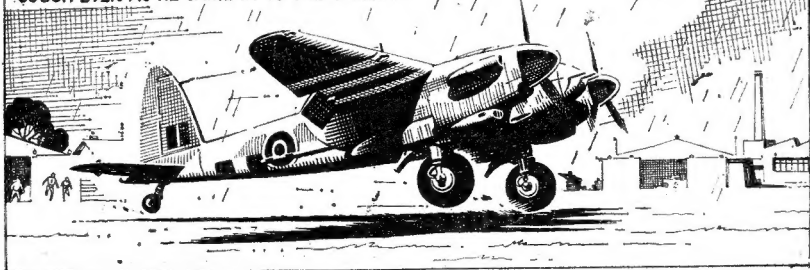
WITH EMPTYING FUEL TANKS, THE MOSQUITO QUARTERED THE NARROW SKY IN A DESPERATE SEARCH FOR AN AIRFIELD. SUDDENLY, WITH THE NEEDLE OF THE PETROL GAUGE HARD OVER ON THE EMPTY SIDE, TOBY JUGG'S VOICE BROKE THE TENSE SILENCE.

TWO MINUTES, TOBY.

THERE, SIR! TO PORT!



SWIFTLY, MICK DIAMOND BANKED THE AIRCRAFT TO PORT, ITS WING TIPS BRUSHING THE DAMP HEDGES. THE PETROL-STARVED ENGINE WAS BEGINNING TO COUGH EVEN AS HE CAME IN TO THE CIRCUIT.



MIKE TAXIED ACROSS THE WET GRASS, NOTING THAT IT WAS A CIVILIAN AIRFIELD. AND AS HE CLIMBED FROM THE COCKPIT...



SORRY TO BARGE
IN ON YOU LIKE THIS!
OUR RADIO GOT SHOT UP
AND I HAD TO PUT HER
DOWN WHERE I COULD!
WHERE ARE WE?

NEAR CAMBRIDGE,
SQUADRON LEADER!
THIS IS THE TELIX
RESEARCH PLACE. WE USE
THIS FIELD FOR TESTING OUR
EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT
INSTRUMENTS.
BUT COME AND HAVE
SOME BREAKFAST!

WEARY WITH THE STRAIN OF THAT LONG BLIND
FLIGHT FROM THE FLAK-FILLED SKIES OF GERMANY,
THE TWO RAF MEN GLADLY FOLLOWED THEIR
CIVILIAN HOSTS TO THE WORKS CANTEEN.



INSTRUMENTS, EH? I WISH YOU
PEOPLE WOULD INVENT A FOOLPROOF
BLIND-FLYING GADGET.

FUNNY YOU SHOULD
MENTION THAT, SQUADRON
LEADER! THAT'S JUST WHAT
WE HAVE INVENTED! AT LEAST,
OUR CHIEF ENGINEER HAS!
COME AND MEET HIM WHEN
YOU'VE WRAPPED YOURSELF
ROUND THOSE EGGS!

THE TELIX COMPANY MADE PRECISION INSTRUMENTS WHICH WERE TO BE FOUND IN MOST OF THE CRACK RAF AIRCRAFT IN OPERATION. AND MICK DIAMOND'S JOGULAR REMARK WAS NOW TO BE UNEXPECTEDLY CAPPED.

SQUADRON LEADER~~ THIS IS OUR CHIEF BOFFIN~~THEODORE CLEGG. I SAY, THEO, THE SQUADRON LEADER'S INTERESTED IN YOUR BLIND-FLYING INSTRUMENT!



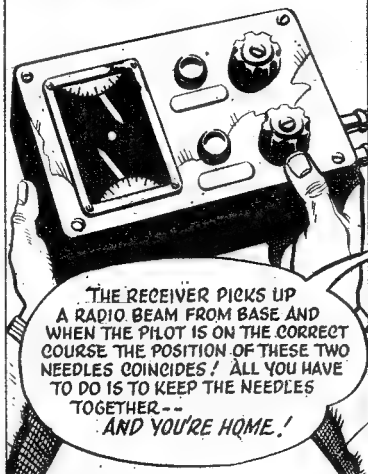
THE THIN MAN WITH THE BULGING FOREHEAD WAS THE TELIX COMPANY'S TOP SCIENTIST~~ AND THE NEW BLIND FLYING INSTRUMENT WAS HIS OWN PET INVENTION.

I WISH WE'D HAD ONE OF THOSE THINGS IN THE MOSQUITO LAST NIGHT, PROF~~ IF IT WORKS AS WELL AS YOUR FRIEND HERE SAYS IT DOES!

OF COURSE IT DOES, SQUADRON LEADER.' THE AIR MINISTRY ARE GOING TO TEST IT SOON, BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT OF THE RESULT.' LET ME SHOW YOU!



WITH EYES SPARKLING THROUGH HIS SPECTACLES, THE BOFFIN EXPLAINED HIS INVENTION TO THE BURLY PATHFINDER ACE.



MIKE DIAMOND WAS IMPRESSED. WITH AN INSTRUMENT LIKE THAT IN HIS MOSQUITO THE DANGERS OF BLIND FLYING WOULD BE GREATLY REDUCED. A SUDDEN IDEA STRUCK HIM...



EAGERLY, THEODORE CLEGG ACCEPTED THE MOSQUITO PILOT'S OFFER. WITH THE OTHERS AT HIS HEELS, HE HURRIED OUT TO THE AIRCRAFT.



WHILE THE SCIENTIST FITTED HIS INSTRUMENT TO THE CONTROL PANEL OF THE MOSQUITO, MECHANICS FILLED ITS TEN SEPARATE TANKS WITH 500 GALLONS OF HIGH OCTANE FUEL. WHEN ALL WAS READY...



PUSHING THE BEWILDERED BOFFIN INTO THE NAVIGATOR'S SEAT, SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND STARTED THE TWO 1,600 HP MERLIN ENGINES. BELOW, FLIGHT LIEUTENANT TOBY JUGG WATCHED EVENTS WITH A SLY GRIN...



Chapter 2. FLYING BLIND

MICK TORE THE MOSQUITO OFF THE GROUND IN A STEEP CLIMB AT 3,000 REVS, 16 BOOST AND 15 DEGREES OF FLAP. THE PETRIFIED THEODORE CLEGG WAS TOO UNNERVED TO NOTICE THE WEATHER, BUT..

THE CLAG'S CLEARED, PROF! WE'LL HAVE TO GO AND LOOK FOR SOME... THE THICKER THE BETTER, EH?

OH, DEAR, IS THAT REALLY NECESSARY? CAN'T WE JUST PRETEND WE'RE IN A CLOUD?

MICK DIAMOND WAS ENJOYING HIMSELF. HE ALWAYS ENJOYED HIMSELF WITH THE STICK BETWEEN HIS FINGERS AND AN ACRE OF BLUE SKY UNDER HIS WINGS. BUT TODAY IT WAS NOT THE BLUE SKY HE WANTED...

PRETEND, PROF? I'M SURPRISED AT YOU SUGGESTING THAT WE DO IT THE PHONEY WAY. THIS HAS GOT TO BE A GENUINE SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT! HANG ON!

OH, DEAR!

THE MOSQUITO BANKED SHARPLY TO PORT AND WENT INTO A GENTLE GLIDE. THE SCIENTIST PELLED WORRIEDLY THROUGH THE PERSPEX WINDSCREEN, AND GAVE A GASP OF HORROR...

HERE, I SAY! THAT'S WATER DOWN THERE!

YOU'RE DEAD RIGHT, PROF -- IT'S THE NORTH SEA! WE'LL JUST HOP ACROSS TO HOLLAND AND SEE IF THERE'S ANY CLOUD THERE!

AS THE AIRCRAFT LOST HEIGHT AND FLATTENED OUT ABOVE THE WHITE-TIPPED SEA, THE MEANING OF THE SQUADRON LEADER'S WORDS HIT THEODORE LIKE A THUNDERCLAP.

BUT DASH IT, THERE ARE GERMANS IN HOLLAND!

LOTS OF THEM, PROF, BUT DON'T WORRY! WE WON'T LET THEM INTERFERE WITH OUR BLIND-FLYING TEST!



WITH HIS HANDS NERVOUSLY GRIPPING THE ARMOUR-PLATED FRAME OF HIS SEAT, THE BOFFIN STARED IN FASCINATED AMAZEMENT AT THIS AMAZING R.A.F. PILOT WHO ACTUALLY SEEMED TO RELISH THE THOUGHT OF A BRUSH WITH THE ENEMY. THIRTY MINUTES LATER...

HURRY, DOGS! SHOOT DOWN THE IMPUDENT BRITISHER!



A BATTERY OF 37mm GUNS OPENED UP FURIOUSLY AS MICK DIAMOND'S MOSQUITO BLARED OVER THE DUTCH COAST IN A CORKSCREW CLIMBING TURN. THE SQUADRON LEADER'S VOICE WAS AGGRIEVED.

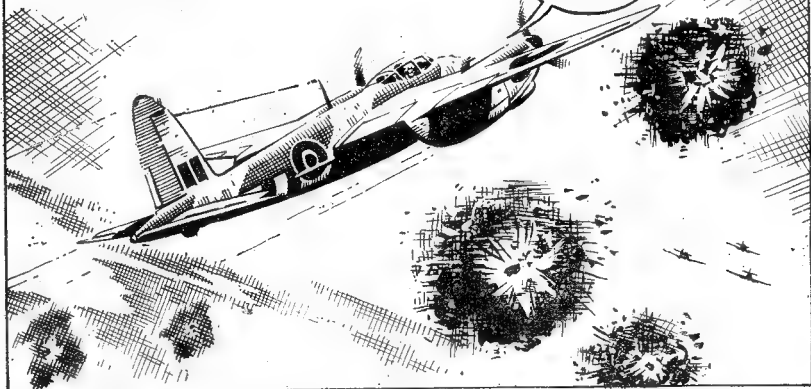
OH, GOOD GRACIOUS!

JERRY SEEMS TO THINK HE OWNS THIS BIT OF SKY! WELL, WE WON'T ARGUE WITH HIM FOR ONCE, PROF. WE DON'T WANT YOUR EXPERIMENT SPOILED, DO WE?



LESS THAN AN HOUR PREVIOUSLY, THEODORE CLEGG HAD BEEN SAFE AND SNUG IN HIS QUIET LABORATORY. NOW ENEMY FLAK WAS BURSTING VICIOUSLY TWENTY YARDS FROM HIS HEAD! FEEBLY, THE BOFFIN MADE A CAST PROTEST.

THERE AREN'T ANY CLOUDS HERE, EITHER, SQUADRON LEADER! DO LET'S GO BACK!



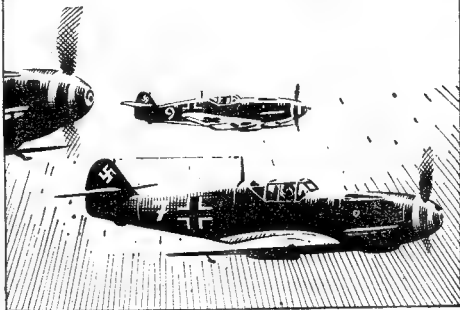
BUT MICK DIAMOND HAD SUDDENLY LOST INTEREST IN CLOUDS. SOMETHING ELSE IN THE WIDE CLEAR SKY HAD CAUGHT HIS ATTENTION -- THE GLINT OF SUNLIGHT ON ENEMY WINGS!

NO CLOUDS, PROF -- JUST A CLEAR BLUE SKY AND A BRIGHT SUN -- AND THREE JERRY KITES CRYING OUT TO BE CLOBBERED!



A THOUSAND FEET BELOW, THREE MESSERSCHMITT 109s FLEW PEACEFULLY IN V FORMATION ABOVE THE FLAT DUTCH COUNTRYSIDE. THIS WAS THEIR OWN TERRITORY. HOW SHOULD THEY KNOW THAT ONE OF THE R.A.F.'S DEADLIEST ACES WAS AT THAT MOMENT MEASURING THEM FOR A KILL?

WE'LL DIVE OUT OF THE SUN AND BOUNCE THEM, PROF! HOLD TIGHT! THIS IS GOING TO BE FUN!



ALREADY BEWILDERED BY HIS VIOLENT EXPERIENCES OF THE LAST HOUR, THEODORE CLEGG COULD ONLY SIGH IN HELPLESS HORROR AS THE MOSQUITO TURNED TO ATTACK.

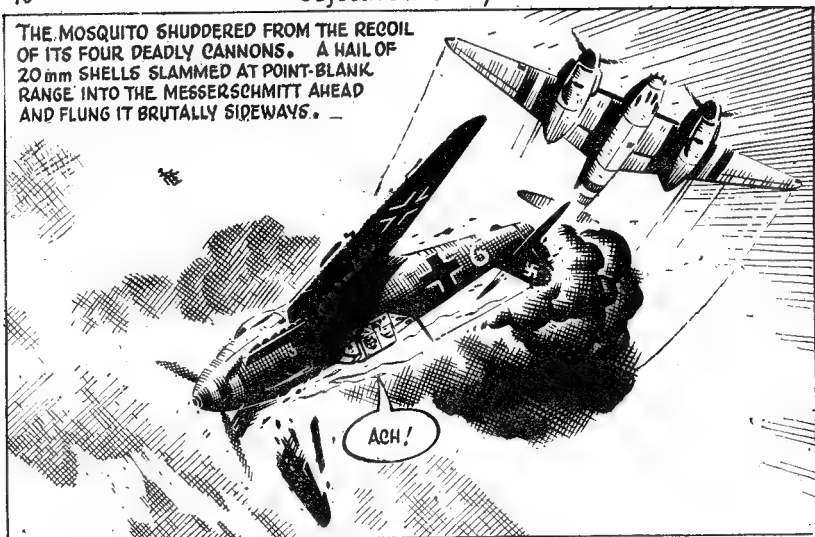
FUN? OH, MY STARS!
WHAT'S HAPPENING
TO ME?



WITH A KEEN EYE FOR TACTICAL ADVANTAGE, MICK WAS ATTACKING FROM THE BURNING EYE OF THE SUN. EVEN IF THE GERMAN PILOTS HAD LOOKED BACK, THE DEADLY MOSQUITO WOULD HAVE BEEN INVISIBLE. BUT THEY DID NOT LOOK BACK...



THE MOSQUITO SHUDDERED FROM THE RECOIL OF ITS FOUR DEADLY CANNONS. A HAIL OF 20 mm SHELLS SLAMMED AT POINT-BLANK RANGE INTO THE MESSERSCHMITT AHEAD AND FLUNG IT BRUTALLY SIDEWAYS. —



MICK BANKED SHARPLY TO AVOID HIS STRICKEN VICTIM. AS HE STEADIED THE MOSQUITO, HE GLANCED INTO HIS MIRROR AND COOLLY SMILED...

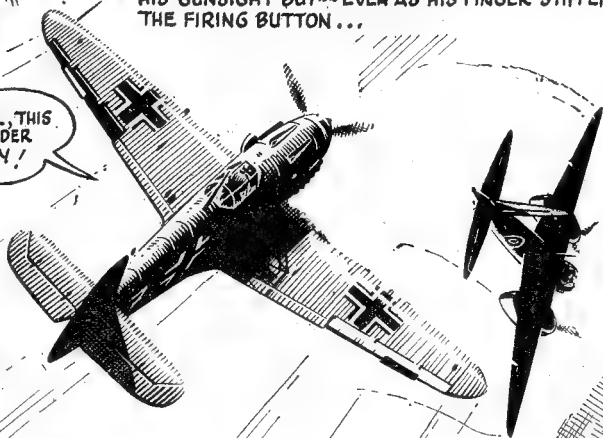
NOW YOU'VE
HAD YOUR -ER- FUN,
SQUADRON LEADER,
CAN'T WE GO
BACK?



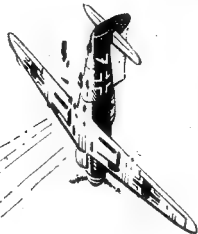
SORRY, NOT YET AWHILE!
ANOTHER JERRY WANTS US
TO STAY AND PLAY, PROF.
HE'S ON OUR TAIL NOW.
HOLD ON TO YOUR
SEAT!

THERE HAD BEEN THREE ME 109s. NOW THERE WERE TWO-- AND ONE OF THEM WAS GRIMLY SEEKING TO AVENGE HIS COMRADE. A SHARP TURN BROUGHT THE MOSQUITO INTO HIS GUNSIGHT BUT-- EVEN AS HIS FINGER STIFFENED ON THE FIRING BUTTON...

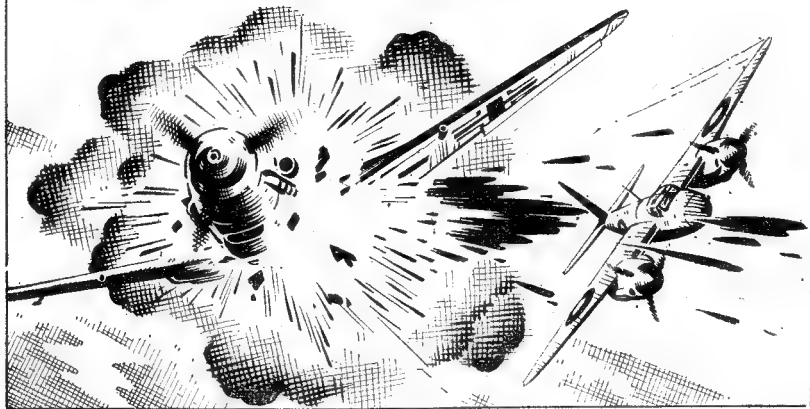
HIMMEL, THIS
ENGLANDER
CAN FLY!



MICK DIAMOND WAS A PAST-MASTER AT AERIAL COMBAT. HIS SPLIT-SECOND BREAK TO THE RIGHT WAS NO PANIC EFFORT TO ESCAPE, BUT A CALCULATED MANOEUVRE WHICH BROUGHT THE MOSQUITO'S CANNONS SAVAGELY TO BEAR ON HIS SLUGGISH ADVERSARY.



SHELLS RIPPED OPEN THE PETROL AND OIL TANKS OF THE SECOND MESSERSCHMITT. FLUNG OUTWARDS BY THE FORCE OF THE EXPLOSION, THE DISCOLOURED SPOUT OF HIGH OCTANE FUEL SPRAYED VICIOUSLY ACROSS THE PATH OF THE BARREL-ROLLING MOSQUITO...



SUDDENLY THE SUNLIT COCKPIT OF THE MOSQUITO WAS DARKENED. LIKE A MONSTROUS THICK RAIN, THE OILY FLUID FROM THE DOOMED MESSERSCHMITT CASCADED OVER THE PERSPECTIVE WINDSCREEN.



THE MOSQUITO'S VIOLENT TURN HAD TOPPLED THE GYRO AND COMPASS. THE ARTIFICIAL HORIZON WAS SWINGING CRAZILY. COOLLY MICK STEADIED THE GROANING AIRCRAFT, AND TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE NEW DANGER...



THE BLACK MIXTURE OF PETROL, OIL AND GLYCOL FROM THE SMASHED TANKS OF THE MESSERSCHMITT HAD SMEARED ITSELF OVER THE MOSQUITO'S WINDSCREEN, COMPLETELY BLOTTING OUT THE SKY!

A GOOD TURN? THE WINDSCREEN'S COVERED WITH THAT BEASTLY MESS! WE'RE THREE THOUSAND FEET UP, TWO HUNDRED MILES FROM ENGLAND-- AND AS BLIND AS BATS!

THAT'S WHY I SAID JERRY HAD DONE US A GOOD TURN, PROF!

A PANICKY NOTE OF ANGER HAD CREPT INTO THE MILD VOICE OF THE BOFFIN. HOW COULD THE SQUADRON LEADER SMILE SO CALMLY AT A TIME LIKE THIS? BUT THE SQUADRON LEADER HAD A REASON FOR SMILING...

THAT'S WHAT WE CAME ON THIS FLIP FOR, WASN'T IT, PROF? TO TEST THAT BLIND-FLYING INVENTION OF YOURS. WELL, WE'RE FLYING BLIND NOW, SO SWITCH ON AND LET'S TEST IT-- AND I HOPE IT WORKS!

THEODORE BLINKED IN ASTONISHMENT, THEN FUMBLER FEVERISHLY FOR THE CONTROLS OF THE INSTRUMENT WHICH NOW WOULD MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

THE NEEDLES ARE MOVING, SQUADRON LEADER! I-- I THINK IT'S WORKING!

GOOD SHOW, PROF!

ACTIVATED BY THE RADIO BEAM FROM THE AIRFIELD IN DISTANT CAMBRIDGE, THE FLICKERING NEEDLES GUIDED THE BLIND AIRCRAFT BACK ON ITS HOMEWARD COURSE.

LEFT A BIT,
SQUADRON LEADER!
A BIT MORE!



AS THE PROFESSOR PEERED AT THE ALL-IMPORTANT DIAL, MICK DIAMOND TRIMMED STICK AND RUDDER, AND THE MOSQUITO GROPED ITS WAY SIGHTLESSLY ALONG THE INVISIBLE LIFELINE WHICH LED TO ENGLAND AND SAFETY...

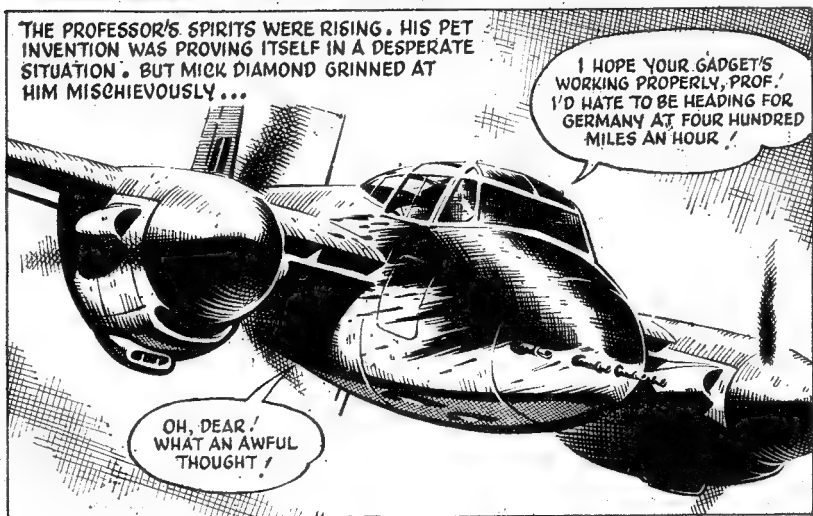
BANG ON COURSE AND
THROTTLES WIDE OPEN, PROF!
HOW ARE WE DOING?



THE PROFESSOR'S SPIRITS WERE RISING. HIS PET INVENTION WAS PROVING ITSELF IN A DESPERATE SITUATION. BUT MICK DIAMOND GRINNED AT HIM MISCHIEVOUSLY...

I HOPE YOUR GADGET'S
WORKING PROPERLY, PROF!
I'D HATE TO BE HEADING FOR
GERMANY AT FOUR HUNDRED
MILES AN HOUR!

OH, DEAR!
WHAT AN AWFUL
THOUGHT!



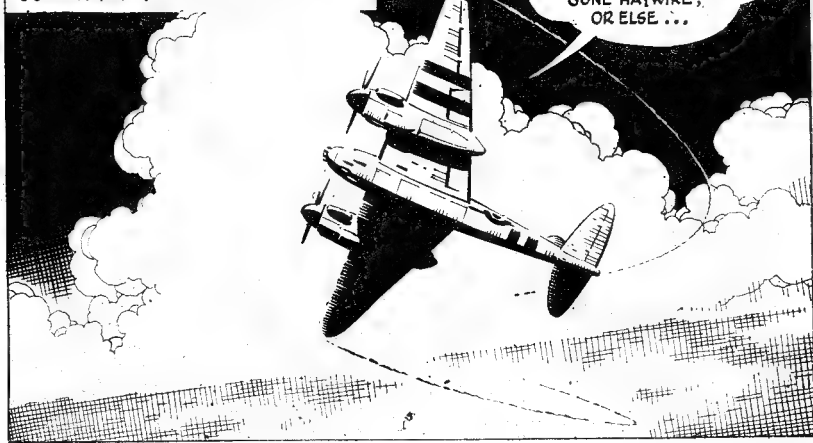
WERE THEY FLYING TOWARDS ENGLAND~~ OR STRAIGHT INTO THE HEART OF ENEMY TERRITORY? THEY HAD NO MEANS OF TELLING. AND THEN, SUDDENLY, AFTER SEVERAL MINUTES WHICH SEEMED LIKE HOURS ...



THE NEEDLES
ARE PARTING,
SQUADRON LEADER!
TURN RIGHT!
KEEP TURNING!

THAT'S
QUEER!

THE BOFFIN'S URGENT INSTRUCTIONS WERE TURNING THE MOSQUITO IN A 180° CHANGE OF COURSE. BAFFLED, THE PATHFINDER ACE SOUGHT AN EXPLANATION ...



WE'RE TURNING BACK
ON OUR OLD COURSE, PROF!
EITHER YOUR GADGET'S
GONE HAYWIRE,
OR ELSE ...

SUDDENLY MICK DIAMOND'S FACE CRACKED IN A GRIN OF RELIEF ~~~ AND HIDDEN FROM HIM ON THE GROUND BELOW...

GOOD GRIEF, I'VE GOT IT! WE'VE ALREADY CROSSED THE AIRFIELD, PROF, AND NOW YOUR GADGET'S TAKING US BACK! STAND BY! I'M GOING DOWN!



THEODORE CLEGG'S INVENTION HAD LED THE BLINDED AIRCRAFT SAFELY HOME, BUT NOW A NEW HAZARD THREATENED THE ACE AND THE BOFFIN...

BUT HOW DO WE LAND, SQUADRON LEADER? MY INSTRUMENT CAN'T DO THAT FOR US!

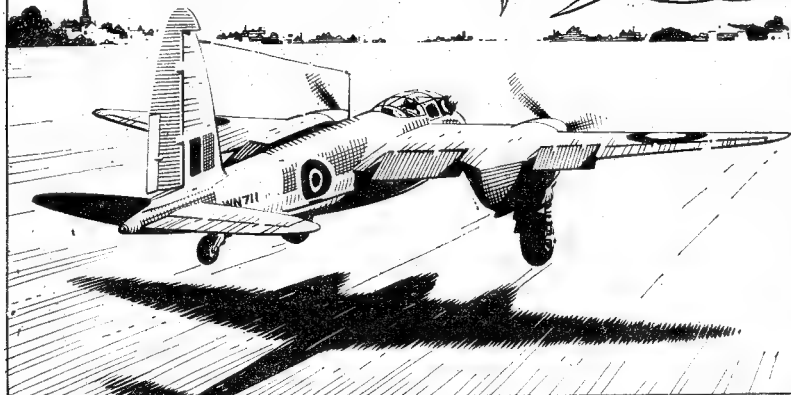
NO, PROF, BUT YOU'VE GOT OTHER INSTRUMENTS WHICH CAN? I MEAN YOUR EYES ~~~ SO START USING THEM!



ON THE TELIX AIRFIELD, TOBY JUGG WATCHED THE MOSQUITO LEVEL OUT AND BEGIN A CAREFUL CIRCUIT. AS THE AIRCRAFT CAME UNSTEADILY NEARER, HIS EYES POPPED...

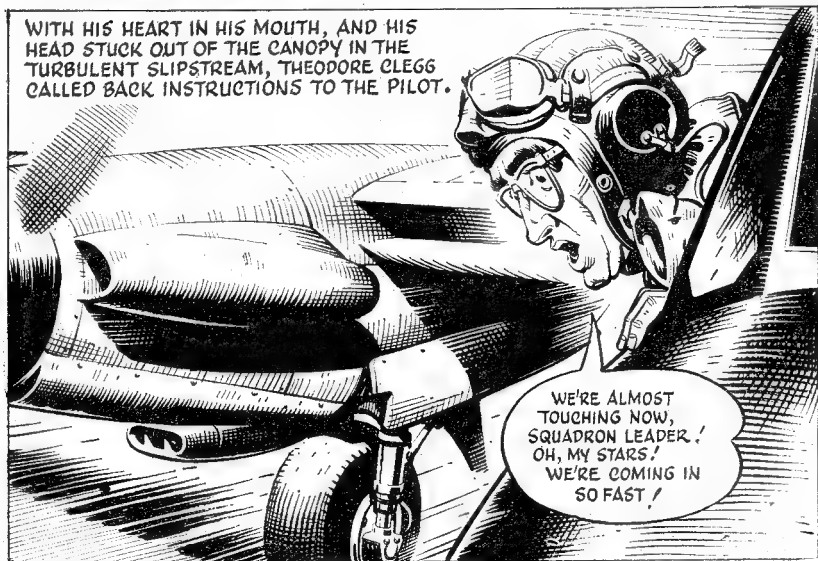
DOWN A BIT, SQUADRON LEADER! OH DEAR! DOWN A BIT MORE!

I ALWAYS KNEW BOFFINS WERE BARMY, BUT THIS BEATS EVERYTHING!



WITH HIS HEART IN HIS MOUTH, AND HIS HEAD STUCK OUT OF THE CANOPY IN THE TURBULENT SLIPSTREAM, THEODORE CLEGG CALLED BACK INSTRUCTIONS TO THE PILOT.

WE'RE ALMOST TOUCHING NOW, SQUADRON LEADER! OH, MY STARS! WE'RE COMING IN SO FAST!



UNABLE TO SEE THE GROUND, SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND LISTENED TO THE BREATHLESS VOICE OF THE BOFFIN AND EASED THE MOSQUITO DOWN TO THE RUNWAY WITH THE INSTINCTIVE SKILL OF A BORN FLYER. ONE AWKWARD BOUNCE ~ AND THEN ...



WEAK- LEGGED AND SPEECHLESS FROM HIS TERRIFYING BAPTISM OF FIRE, THE BOFFIN WAS HELPED TO FIRM GROUND.



WHILE THE OIL-SMEARED MOSQUITO WAS HOSED DOWN BY MECHANICS, MICK TOLD HIS STORY. BUT THE BOFFIN DID NOT SEEM TO BE LISTENING...

WELL, PROF, WE MUST BE GOING! I'LL TELL THE BRASS HATS YOUR GADGET IS A HUNDRED PER CENT SUCCESS! AND BETWEEN YOU AND ME, YOU DIDN'T DO SO BADLY YOURSELF!

OH, ER~~ GOODBYE, SQUADRON LEADER! AND THANK YOU FOR THE MOST, ER~~ INTERESTING SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT!



THE RAF ACE'S JOCLAR REMARK HAD PLANTED A SEED OF THOUGHT IN THE SCIENTIST'S FERTILE MIND.



**WERE PILOTS REALLY NECESSARY?
WAS THE BOFFIN'S THOUGHT...**

ALL THESE RAF TYPES
ARE MAD, DON'T YOU
THINK, THEO?

NOT MAD, BUT UNPREDICTABLE!
DEAR ME, YES! NOT LIKE A NICE,
ACCURATE, OBEDIENT PIECE OF SCIENTIFIC
EQUIPMENT! WELL, WELL, I'LL BE GETTING
BACK TO MY LABORATORY? I HAVE AN
IDEA I WANT TO LOOK INTO!

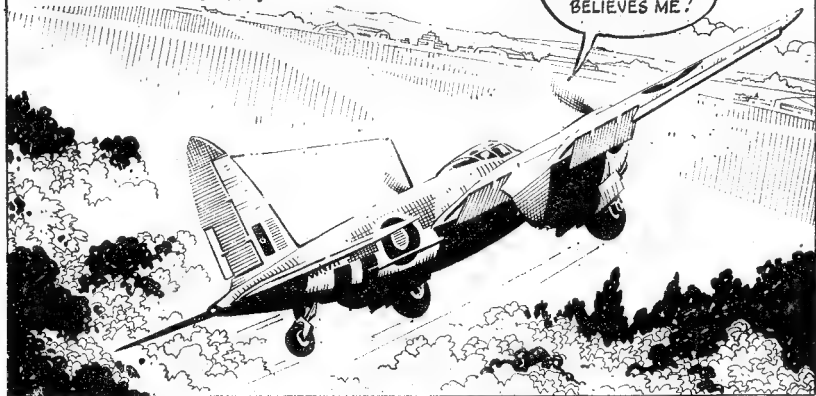
IN TURN, THE PILOT HAD HIS OWN
DOUBTS ABOUT THE BOFFIN AS HE
WHIPPED THE MOSQUITO INTO
THE SKY.

ALL THESE
BOFFINS ARE
BARMY, EH,
SIR?

NOT BARMY, TOBY,
BUT A BIT UP IN THE
CLOUDS! THE PROF'S
A CLEVER CHAP, BUT HE'S
GOT A ONE-TRACK MIND!
WELL, LET'S GET BACK
TO THE STATION AND
SEE WHAT'S COOKING!

FOUR HOURS OVERDUE, THE MOSQUITO COVERED
THE FIFTY MILES TO THE RAF STATION IN
LINCOLNSHIRE IN A FEW MINUTES.
SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND REHEARSED
HIS IMPROBABLE STORY.

I'D BETTER SPIN
THE SPY A GOOD YARN
ABOUT THE PROF AT
DE-BRIEFING!
LET'S HOPE HE
BELIEVES ME!



THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICER, OR "SPY" AS THE PILOTS CALLED HIM, WAS WAITING IMPATIENTLY FOR MICK ...

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, MICK? GROUP'S BEEN SCREAMING FOR YOU SINCE DAWN!



HURRIEDLY, SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND REPORTED TO THE GROUP CAPTAIN. HE STARTED TO EXPLAIN, BUT THE SENIOR OFFICER GRIMLY CUT HIM SHORT.

SORRY I'M LATE, SIR! WE PUT DOWN AT A CIVVY AIRFIELD AND MET A BOFFIN.

TELL ME ANOTHER TIME, MICK! I'VE GOT AN URGENT JOB FOR YOU! COME AND LOOK AT THIS MAP!



A NEW TARGET AWAITED
THE PATHFINDER ACE...

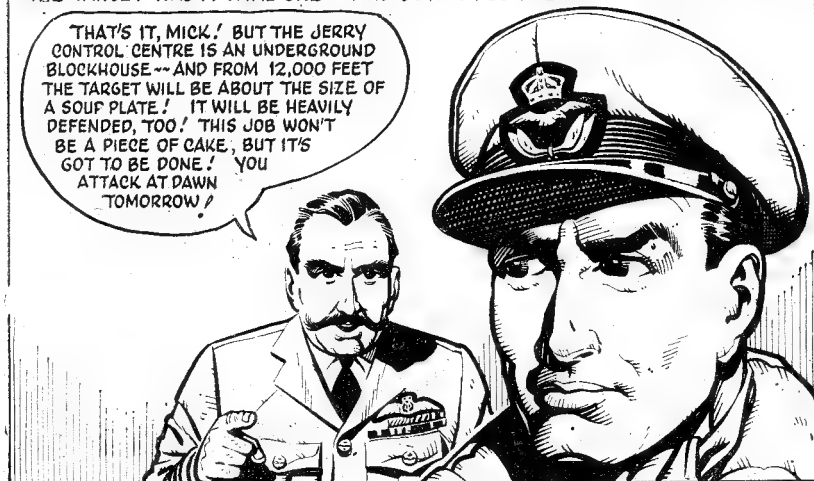
AS YOU KNOW, MICK, THE JERRIES ARE FIRING GUIDED MISSILES AT LONDON. WE'VE BEEN BOMBING THE LAUNCHING SITES FOR WEEKS, BUT STILL THEY COME. NOW OUR INTELLIGENCE BOYS HAVE FOUND ONE OF THE NERVE CENTRES FROM WHICH THE FIRING APPARATUS IS CONTROLLED. IT'S HERE.



I SEE, SIR!
AND WE'RE TO
MARK IT FOR THE
BOMBER BOYS!

THE TARGET WAS A VITAL ONE -- AND BOTH SIDES KNEW IT...


THAT'S IT, MICK! BUT THE JERRY CONTROL CENTRE IS AN UNDERGROUND BLOCKHOUSE -- AND FROM 12,000 FEET THE TARGET WILL BE ABOUT THE SIZE OF A SOUP PLATE! IT WILL BE HEAVILY DEFENDED, TOO! THIS JOB WON'T BE A PIECE OF CAKE, BUT IT'S GOT TO BE DONE! YOU ATTACK AT DAWN TOMORROW!



Chapter 3. **HUMAN MARKERS**

BEFORE DAYLIGHT NEXT MORNING, EIGHTEEN LANCASTER BOMBERS LUMBERED INTO THE DARK SKY FROM A NEIGHBOURING AIRFIELD. THE MOSQUITO, FASTER THAN THE HEAVY BOMBERS, TOOK OFF THIRTY MINUTES LATER AND HEADED EAST INTO THE DAWN.

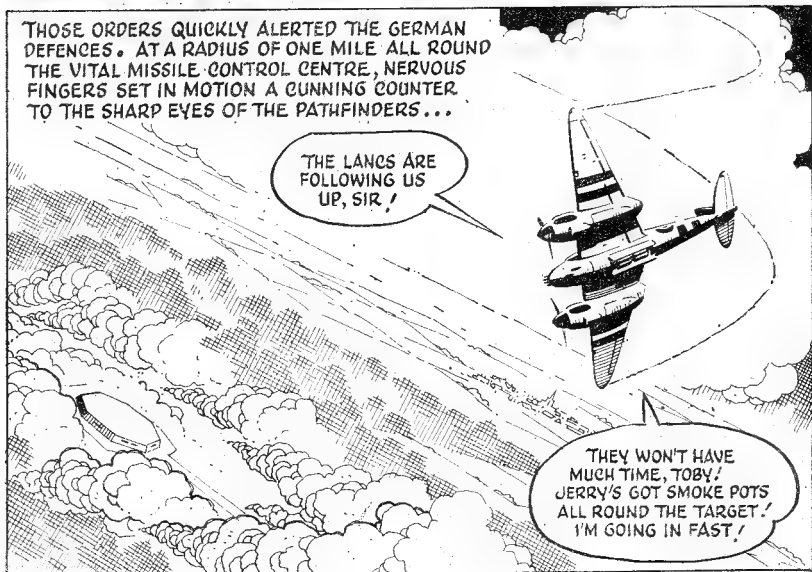
APPROACHING
THE TARGET, TOBY!
LINE UP THE
MARKERS!



BEFORE THE MOSQUITO HAD CROSSED THE ENEMY-OCCUPIED COAST OF FRANCE, KEEN EYES HAD SPOTTED IT AND URGENT ORDERS WENT OUT FROM A GERMAN OBSERVATION POST...



THOSE ORDERS QUICKLY ALERTED THE GERMAN DEFENCES. AT A RADIUS OF ONE MILE ALL ROUND THE VITAL MISSILE CONTROL CENTRE, NERVOUS FINGERS SET IN MOTION A CUNNING COUNTER TO THE SHARP EYES OF THE PATHFINDERS...



EVEN AS THE MOSQUITO SPEARED DOWNWARD, THE SMOKE SCREEN ROLLED HEAVILY FROM ALL SIDES TOWARDS THE BLOCKHOUSE. FLAK BURST VICIOUSLY UNDER THE RAKING BRITISH WINGS. THE GERMANS WERE TAKING NO CHANCES WITH THIS VITAL TARGET.



MICK DIAMOND'S MARKERS LOBBED DOWN WITH HIS USUAL UNCANNY ACCURACY ON TO THE VERY ROOF OF THE BLOCKHOUSE. BUT SOON THEIR BRIGHT SPOTS OF FIRE WERE BEING SNUFFED OUT ONE BY ONE UNDER THE BLANKET OF SMOKE.

THE MARKERS ARE SPOT ON THE TARGET, SIR, BUT THE SMOKE SCREEN WILL HIDE THEM IN A FEW SECONDS!

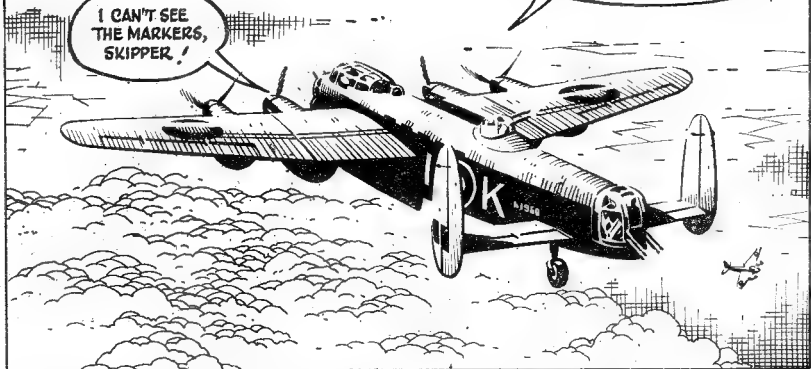
DOGSTAR TO SHARK LEADER. MARKERS GONE. JERRY'S USING SMOKE POTS, SO GET CRACKING!



MICK'S URGENT VOICE CRACKLED IN THE COCKPIT OF THE LEADING BOMBER FIVE THOUSAND FEET ABOVE. BUT ALREADY THE BOMB AIMER WAS SHAKING HIS HEAD RUEFULLY.

SHARK LEADER
TO DOGSTAR!
WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO
AIM OUR BOMBS AT? ALL
WE CAN SEE IS SMOKE!

I CAN'T SEE
THE MARKERS,
SKIPPER!



THE GERMAN SMOKE SCREEN HAD FOILED THE RAF'S NORMAL BOMBING TECHNIQUE. IF THE LANCASTERS WERE NOT TO RETURN EMPTY HANDED WITH THEIR FOUR TONS OF BOMBS, SOMETHING DESPERATE WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE.

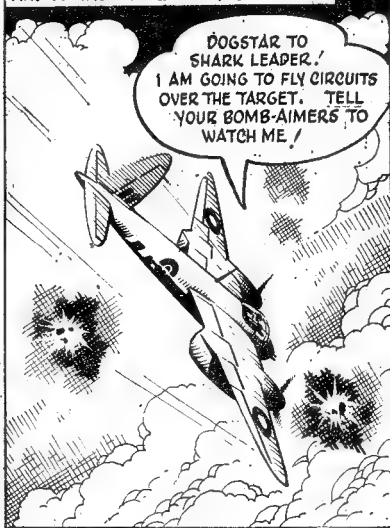
WHAT DO WE DO
NOW, SIR?



THE JERRIES AREN'T
GOING TO BEAT ME, THAT'S
ALL I KNOW. I'VE A PRETTY GOOD
IDEA WHERE THAT BLOCKHOUSE
IS UNDER THE SMOKE --
SO HERE GOES!

A PLAN HAD ALREADY FORMED IN MICK DIAMOND'S RAZOR-SHARP MIND. AND IT WAS DESPERATE ALL RIGHT...

DOGSTAR TO
SHARK LEADER!
I AM GOING TO FLY CIRCUITS
OVER THE TARGET. TELL
YOUR BOMB-AIMERS TO
WATCH ME!



THE LANCASTER CREWS, EIGHT THOUSAND FEET ABOVE THE DIVING MOSQUITO, HEARD THAT COOL VOICE OVER THEIR RADIOS WITH WIDENING EYES...

...AND AIM AT MY WINGS!

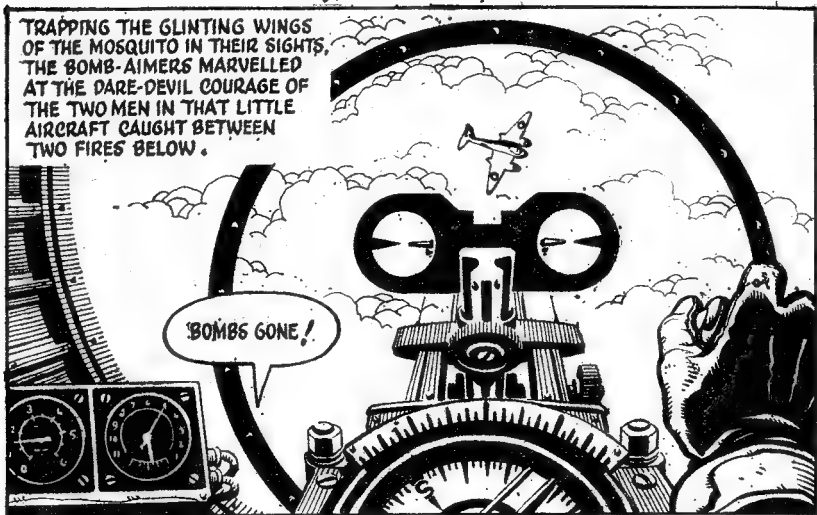
GOOD GRIEF!
TRUST MICK TO
THINK OF THAT!

AT ONE THOUSAND FEET, THE PATHFINDER ACE FLATTENED OUT AND BEGAN TO WEAVE A TIGHT CIRCLE OVER THE HIDDEN TARGET. NOW THE BOMB AIMERS HAD A HUMAN MARKER...

CRUIKEY, THE JERRY FLAK'S
BAD ENOUGH WITHOUT HAVING
BOMBS THROWN AT US BY
OUR OWN SIDE!

DON'T WORRY,
TOBY, THEY MIGHT
NOT HIT US!

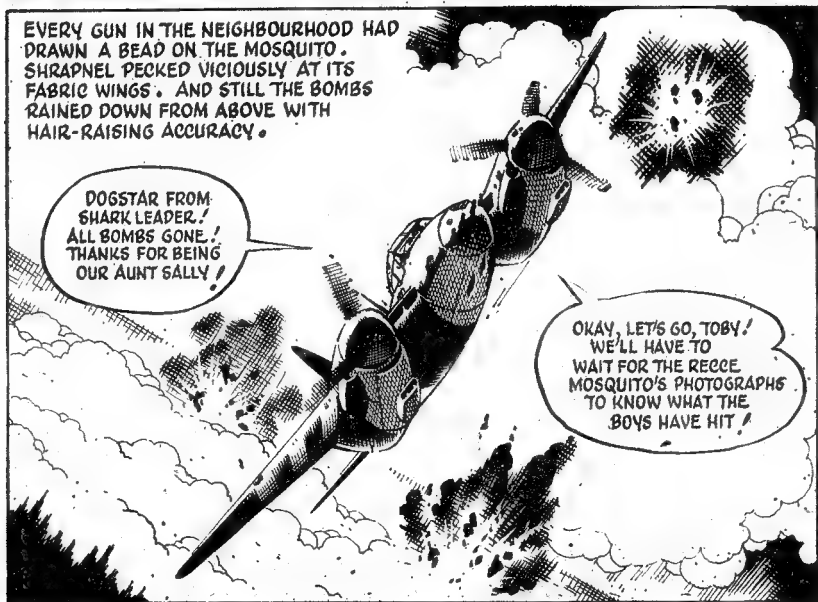
TRAPPING THE GLINTING WINGS OF THE MOSQUITO IN THEIR SIGHTS, THE BOMB-AIMERS MARVELLED AT THE DARE-DEVIL COURAGE OF THE TWO MEN IN THAT LITTLE AIRCRAFT CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO FIRES BELOW.



EVERY GUN IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HAD DRAWN A BEAD ON THE MOSQUITO. SHRAPNEL PECKED VICIOUSLY AT ITS FABRIC WINGS. AND STILL THE BOMBS RAINED DOWN FROM ABOVE WITH HAIR-RAISING ACCURACY.

DOGSTAR FROM SHARK LEADER! ALL BOMBS GONE! THANKS FOR BEING OUR AUNT SALLY!

OKAY, LET'S GO, TOBY! WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE REECE MOSQUITO'S PHOTOGRAPHS TO KNOW WHAT THE BOYS HAVE HIT!



AT LAST THE PERILOUS JOB WAS DONE. FUSELAGE RIDDLED BY FLAK, THE MOSQUITO CLIMBED OUT OF RANGE AND HEADED WEST FOR HOME. THAT AFTERNOON, A HIGH FLYING RECONNAISSANCE MOSQUITO BROUGHT BACK PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE TARGET.



THE RAID HAD FAILED. STUBBORNLY, MICK DIAMOND LOOKED AT THE EVIDENCE OF THE AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH.


TARGET UNTOUCHED, MICK! YOU DID MORE THAN YOUR SHARE OF MARKING, BUT IT STILL ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH. WE'VE GOT TO HIT THAT BLOCKHOUSE! ONE DIRECT HIT WOULD DO THE TRICK!

IT'S PRECISION BOMBING WE NEED, SIR, BUT THE BOYS ARE HAVING TO BOMB BLIND THROUGH THAT SMOKE SCREEN! WELL, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO GO ON TRYING!



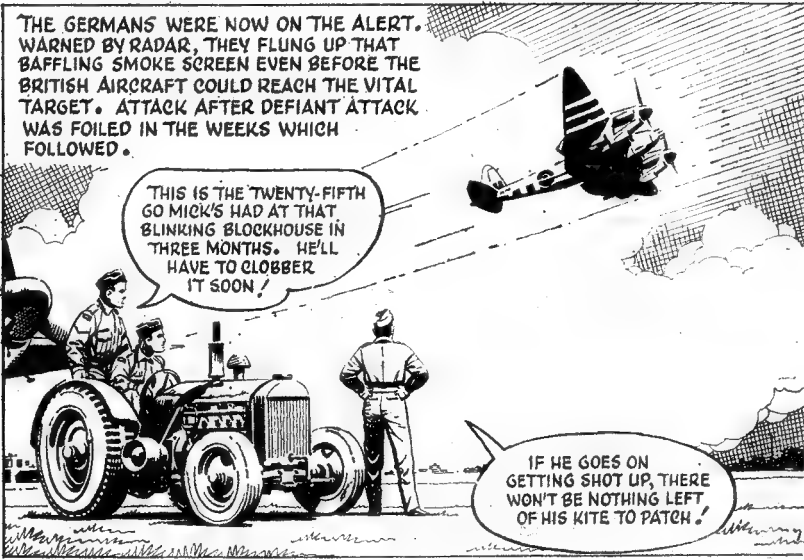
NEXT DAY, SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND LED THE LANCASTERS BACK TO THE BLOCKHOUSE TARGET. AGAIN THE SMOKE SCREEN FOILED THEM. THE FOLLOWING DAY, MICK TRIED A LOW-LEVEL APPROACH. BUT ONCE MORE, IT WAS NO USE...

IT'S HOPELESS, TOBY! JERRY PUTS THAT SMOKE UP QUICKER EVERY TIME WE ATTACK!



THE GERMANS WERE NOW ON THE ALERT. WARNED BY RADAR, THEY FLUNG UP THAT BAFFLING SMOKE SCREEN EVEN BEFORE THE BRITISH AIRCRAFT COULD REACH THE VITAL TARGET. ATTACK AFTER DEFIANT ATTACK WAS FOILED IN THE WEEKS WHICH FOLLOWED.

THIS IS THE TWENTY-FIFTH GO MICK'S HAD AT THAT BLINKING BLOCKHOUSE IN THREE MONTHS. HE'LL HAVE TO CLOBBER IT SOON!



IF HE GOES ON GETTING SHOT UP, THERE WON'T BE NOTHING LEFT OF HIS KITE TO PATCH!

WEARY OF THESE FRUITLESS ATTACKS, THE LANCASTER PILOTS NO LONGER HID THEIR DESPONDENCE. ONLY MICK DIAMOND STUBBORNLY FLUNG HIS BATTERED AIRCRAFT AGAIN AND AGAIN INTO THAT LURID CAULDRON OF FIRE.

SHARK LEADER
FROM DOGSTAR!
TRY AIMING AT
ME AGAIN!

DON'T STICK YOUR
NECK OUT FOR NOTHING,
DOGSTAR!
WE'LL NEVER HIT IT
THIS WAY! I'M SAVING
MY BOMBS! OUT!

THAT DAY, AS MICK BROUGHT THE AIRCRAFT BACK TO ITS BASE, TOBY JUGG BROKE INTO HIS BITTER THOUGHTS...

THERE MUST BE A
WAY OF HITTING THAT
BLOCKHOUSE ~ ~
THERE MUST BE!

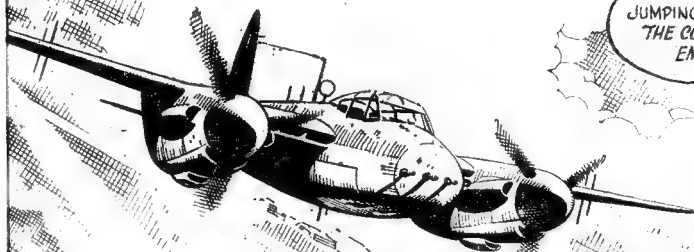
THAT MOSQUITO'S
NOT ONE OF THE
SQUADRON'S, SIR!
LOOK!



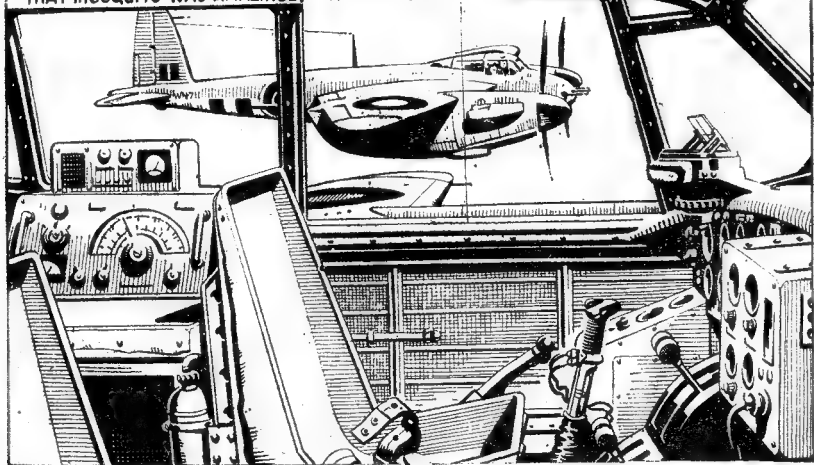
ANOTHER MOSQUITO WAS CLIMBING AWAY FROM THE AIRFIELD. AS IT SWUNG PAST, TWO HUNDRED FEET AWAY, AND MICK CASUALLY GLANCED AT IT TO SEE IF HE KNEW THE PILOT...

DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE, SIR?

JUMPING CATFISH!
THE COCKPIT'S
EMPTY!



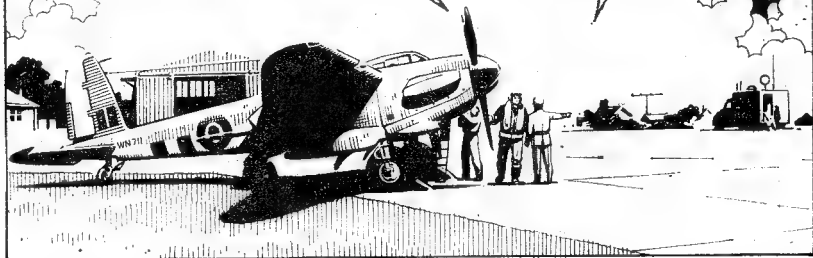
UNABLE TO BELIEVE HIS EYES, THE PATHFINDER ACE BANKED SHARPLY TO HAVE ANOTHER LOOK. BUT HIS EYES HAD NOT DECEIVED HIM. THE PILOT'S SEAT OF THAT MOSQUITO WAS AMAZINGLY -- UNCANNILY EMPTY!



MICK SLAMMED DOWN HIS MOSQUITO ON THE RUNWAY WITH IMPATIENT CURIOSITY.

AM I SEEING THINGS, CLIFF, OR WAS THAT MOSQUITO UP THERE FLYING ITSELF?

SO YOU SAW IT, DID YOU? TAKE A LOOK AT THAT CONTROL VAN OVER THERE!



SPRINTING ACROSS THE AIRFIELD TOWARDS THE CONTROL VAN, MICK TOOK IN THE AERIALS' BRISTLING ON ITS ROOF WITH A SWIFT GLANCE. BUT A FURTHER SURPRISE AWAITED HIM...

THE PROFESSOR, BY JINGO! WHAT THE DICKENS IS HAPPENING AROUND HERE?

A REMOTE-CONTROLLED AIRCRAFT, MICK, THAT'S MR CLEGG'S IDEA FOR BLITZING THAT BLOCKHOUSE! HE BROUGHT HIS INVENTION TO US A WEEK AGO, AND IT SEEMED TO US WORTH TRYING. THE MOSQUITO YOU SAW IS HEADING FOR THE TARGET RIGHT NOW... WITH A TWO-TON BOMB ON BOARD AND NO PILOT!



MICK DIAMOND FELT THIS WAS A BITTER BLOW TO HIS PRIDE, BUT HE HAD TO ADMIT THE TRUTH~~ THAT AFTER THREE MONTHS OF DEATH-DEFYING ENDEAVOUR, THE BLOCKHOUSE STOOD INTACT! AND NOW THE BOFFIN AND HIS MACHINE WERE TAKING OVER.

1 SEE, SIR! IF THIS GADGET WORKS, I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB! WELL, YOU KNOW BEST...

OH, DEAR!

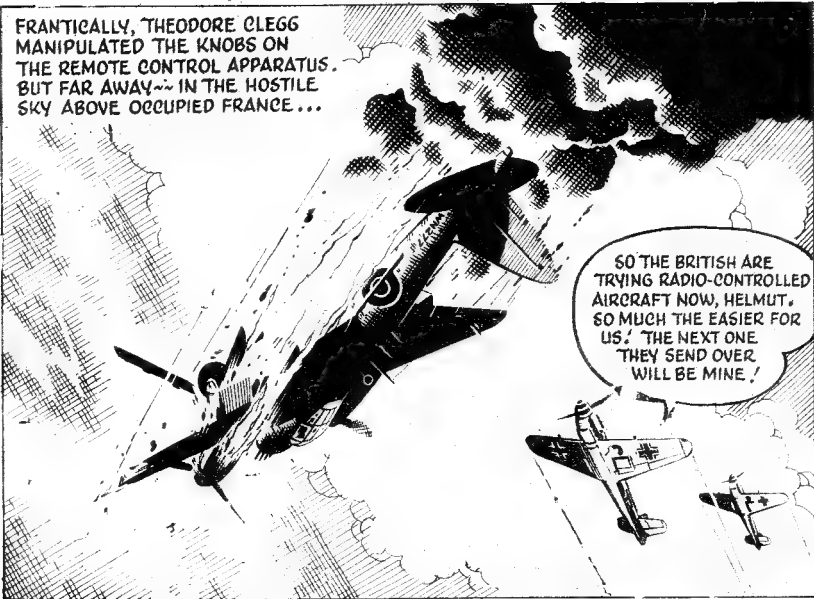


BY MEANS OF RADIO WAVES, THE SCIENTIST COULD STEER THE EMPTY AIRCRAFT UNERRINGLY ACROSS THE SKY, TWO HUNDRED MILES AWAY. BUT NOW THE PROFESSOR WAS DISMAYED...

THE AIRCRAFT IS NO LONGER RESPONDING, GROUP CAPTAIN! I BROUGHT IT RIGHT UP TO THE TARGET: BUT SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED TO IT! THE CONTROL PANEL HAS GONE DEAD!

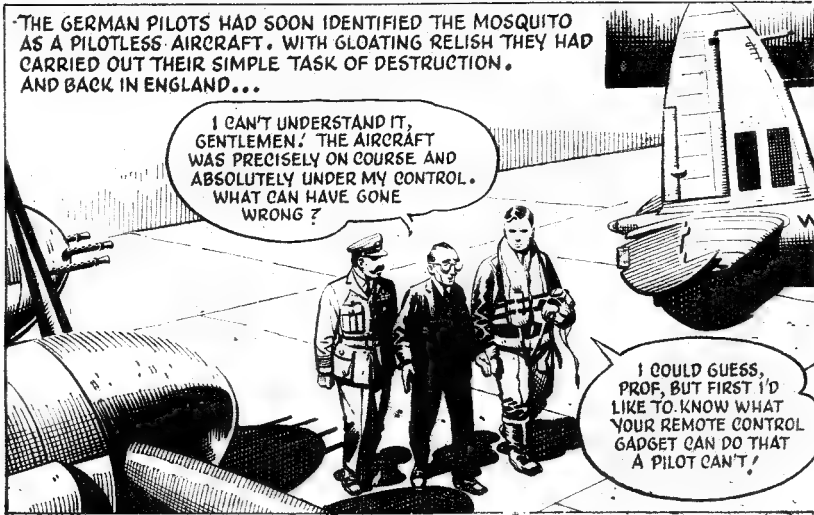


FRANTICALLY, THEODORE GLEGG MANIPULATED THE KNOBS ON THE REMOTE CONTROL APPARATUS. BUT FAR AWAY-- IN THE HOSTILE SKY ABOVE OCCUPIED FRANCE...



SO THE BRITISH ARE TRYING RADIO-CONTROLLED AIRCRAFT NOW, HELMUT. SO MUCH THE EASIER FOR US. THE NEXT ONE THEY SEND OVER WILL BE MINE.

THE GERMAN PILOTS HAD SOON IDENTIFIED THE MOSQUITO AS A PILOTLESS AIRCRAFT. WITH GLOATING RELISH THEY HAD CARRIED OUT THEIR SIMPLE TASK OF DESTRUCTION. AND BACK IN ENGLAND...



I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, GENTLEMEN. THE AIRCRAFT WAS PRECISELY ON COURSE AND ABSOLUTELY UNDER MY CONTROL. WHAT CAN HAVE GONE WRONG?

I COULD GUESS, PROF, BUT FIRST I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOUR REMOTE CONTROL GADGET CAN DO THAT A PILOT CAN'T.

THE BOFFIN'S VOICE ROSE ...



A PILOT CAN'T SEE
THROUGH SMOKE, CAN
HE, SQUADRON LEADER?
WELL, A REMOTE-CONTROLLED
AIRCRAFT CAN,-- OR RATHER, IT
DOES NOT NEED TO! IT WILL BE
DIRECTED OVER THE TARGET BY
RADIO, AND ITS BOMB RELEASED
AT A POINT PREDETERMINED BY
A COMPUTATION OF AIR SPEED
AND DISTANCE TRAVERSED.
THAT BOMB WILL HIT THE
BLOCKHOUSE, POINT BLANK!
MERE SMOKE CANNOT
STOP A SCIENTIFIC
INSTRUMENT!

BUT THE RAF PILOT HAD A SHARP ANSWER READY...

BUT SOMETHING ELSE CAN STOP IT,
PROF! FLAK, PERHAPS? OR WAS
IT A MESSERSCHMITT WHICH
BAGGED YOUR PRECIOUS
GADGET JUST NOW?

HOLD IT, MICK! WE
KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, BUT
THAT BLOCKHOUSE HAS GOT
TO BE SMASHED SOMEHOW!
ONE TWO-TON BOMB WOULD
DO IT! WE'LL TRY AGAIN
TOMORROW, MR CLEGG!



ALL THAT NIGHT THE FITTERS WORKED TO CONVERT A SECOND PILOTLESS MOSQUITO. AT DAWN, WITH A TWO-TON BOMB PACKED INTO ITS FUSELAGE, IT STOOD READY FOR ACTION...



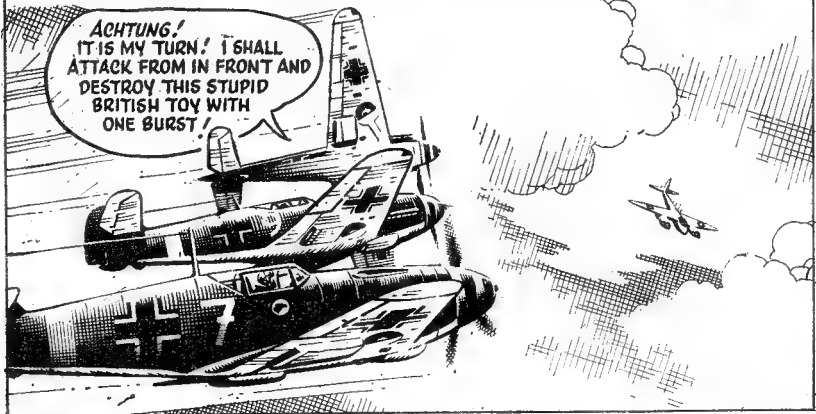
MICK REMEMBERED THAT MORNING THREE MONTHS BEFORE WHEN HE AND THE BOFFIN HAD MADE A NERVE-SHATTERING EXPERIMENT IN BLIND-FLYING. SO THIS WAS THE RESULT!



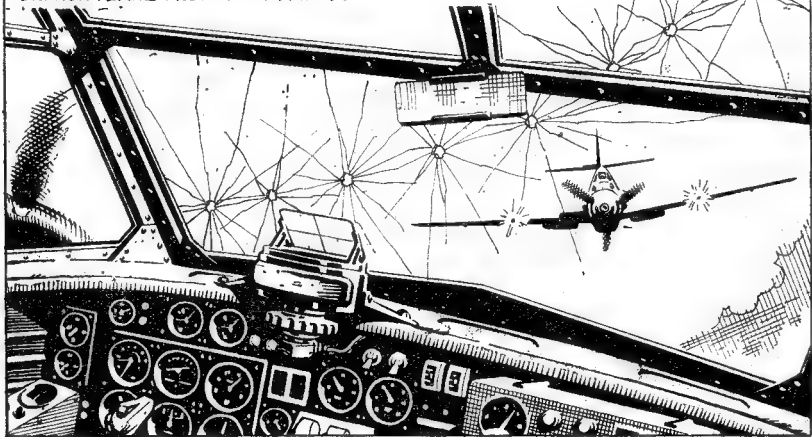
Chapter 4. VICTORY ROLL

GUIDED BY THOSE INVISIBLE RADIO REINS WHICH THE BOFFIN WAS HOLDING BACK IN ENGLAND, THE PILOTLESS MOSQUITO BANKED AND STEADIED ON ITS NEW COURSE WITH PERFECT PRECISION. BUT, TWO THOUSAND FEET ABOVE ...

ACHTUNG!
IT IS MY TURN! I SHALL
ATTACK FROM IN FRONT AND
DESTROY THIS STUPID
BRITISH TOY WITH
ONE BURST!



THE GERMAN FIGHTER-PILOTS WERE ENJOYING THIS ONE-SIDED AIR BATTLE. THESE WERE ODDS WHICH THEY ACCEPTED WITH RELISH. LAZILY, THE LEADER SWEEPED DOWN ON THE UNDEFENDED BRITISH PLANE FROM DEAD AHEAD.



THE BRIEF HAIL OF BULLETS RAKED THE MOSQUITO AND, WITH A SHATTERING ROAR, THE BOMB UNDER ITS FUSELAGE TOUCHED OFF AND THE AIRCRAFT SPLIT APART IN ONE FIERY SECOND.

IT IS EASY MEAT, AS THE STUPID ENGLISH SAY!

WE WILL SEND A COUPLE OF BOMBERS UP NEXT TIME. OUR AIR-GUNNERS NEED SOME TARGET PRACTICE, AND THIS BORES ME.

FAR AWAY ON AN AIRFIELD IN LINCOLNSHIRE, A DISTRAUGHT THEODORE CLEGG STRUGGLED WITH HIS CAREERING DIALS.

I HAVE LOST CONTROL!
THE PANEL HAS GONE DEAD
AGAIN! BUT I KNOW MY
INSTRUMENTS ARE FOOLPROOF!
WHAT IS HAPPENING?

THE BOFFIN WAS BEWILDERED, BUT
MICK DIAMOND KNEW THE RIGHT
ANSWER...

WHY DON'T YOU
FACE IT, PROF? THE
JERRY FIGHTERS ARE
CLOBBERING THOSE PLANES
ONE BY ONE LIKE SITTING
BIRDS. YOUR GADGET MAY
BE A WIZARD FOR AIMING
BOMBS~~ BUT YOU NEED
MEN TO FLY A
FIGHTING PLANE!



MICK'S WORDS BROUGHT THE PROF FURIOUSLY
TO HIS FEET.

IT'S NOT TRUE!
MEN CANNOT WORK TO
PRECISE INSTRUCTIONS
AS MY INSTRUMENTS
CAN!

LOOK HERE,
YOU CRAZY
BOFFIN...

THAT WILL DO,
YOU TWO!



THEODORE CLEGG BELIEVED IN SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS AND MICK BELIEVED IN MEN AS WELL. BUT HOW WAS THE PATHFINDER ACE TO CONVINCE THE BOFFIN THAT HE WAS RIGHT?

WE'LL GIVE YOU ONE MORE SHOT, MR CLEGG. I'LL HAVE THE FITTERS CONVERT A THIRD MOSQUITO FOR YOU!

THE PROF'S IDEA IS ONLY HALF RIGHT, BUT CAN I PROVE IT BEFORE GROUP GETS FED UP WITH THE WHOLE THING? I WONDER...



OVER A QUIET MEAL IN THE MESS, SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND PONDERED THE PROBLEM. IT WAS A LONG TIME BEFORE A SLOW SMILE LIFTED THE CORNERS OF HIS LIPS~~ AND JUST BEFORE DAWN NEXT MORNING...

MORNING, SIR!
IF YOU'VE COME TO SEE THE LADS WORKING ON THE KITE~~ YOU'RE TOO LATE! THEY'VE FINISHED THE JOB AND GONE!

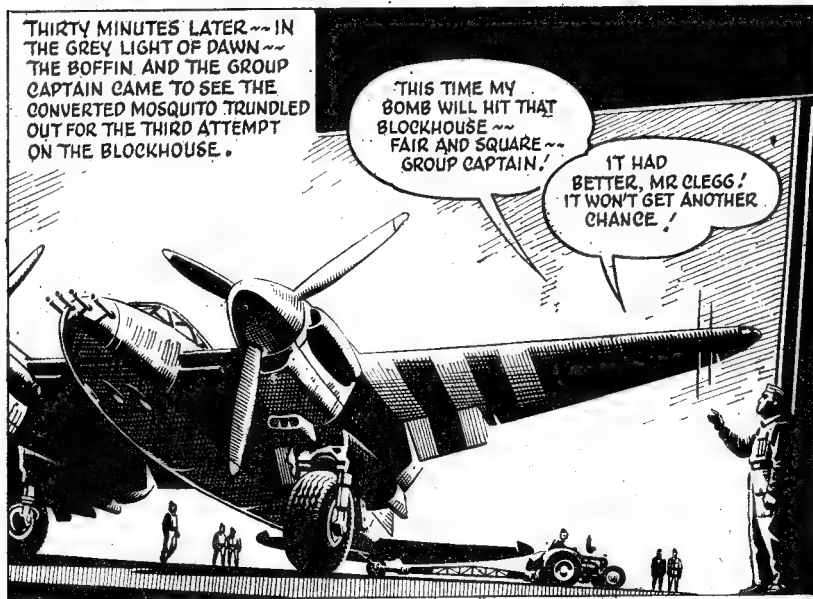
OH, THAT'S THE RADIO-CONTROLLED MOSQUITO, IS IT? NO, I JUST STROLLED OVER TO TELL YOU I'VE SEEN A SUSPICIOUS-LOOKING CIVVY BOB FERRETING AROUND THE CONTROL VAN!



MICK'S CASUAL WORDS SET THE SENTRY HURRYING OFF. AND AS HE TURNED HIS BACK, THE DAREDEVIL AGE SLIPPED NOISELESSLY INTO THE SILENT AND DESERTED HANGAR...



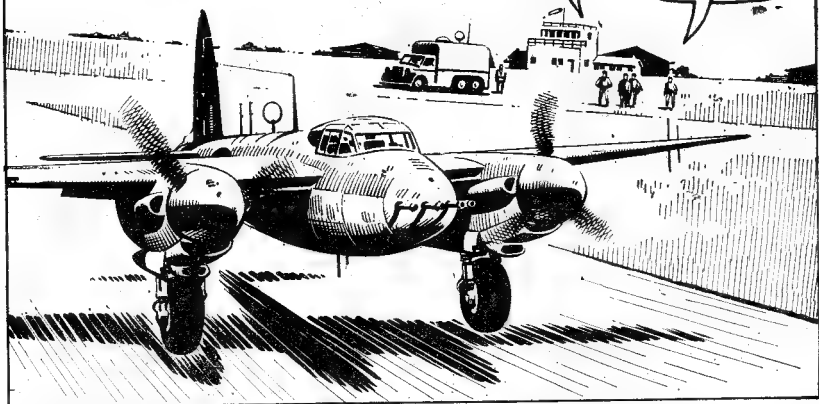
THIRTY MINUTES LATER ~ IN THE GREY LIGHT OF DAWN ~ THE BOFFIN AND THE GROUP CAPTAIN CAME TO SEE THE CONVERTED MOSQUITO TRUNDLED OUT FOR THE THIRD ATTEMPT ON THE BLOCKHOUSE.



PALE WITH DETERMINATION, THE SCIENTIST
HUDDLED OVER THE REMOTE CONTROL APPARATUS
IN THE VAN. WITH A THUNDEROUS ROAR, THE
GUIDED MOSQUITO WHIPPED ACROSS THE GRASS.

WEIRD, ISN'T IT,
TO THINK OF THAT
KITE TAKING OFF WITH
NO ONE IN
HER!

HAS ANYBODY
SEEN MICK?

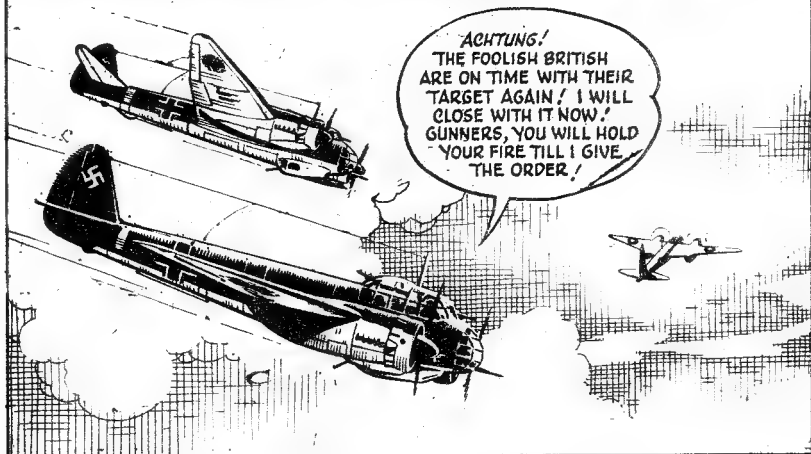


NOBODY AMONG THE GROUP OF WATCHING PILOTS HAD SEEN MICK DIAMOND
THAT MORNING. AND THE REASON WAS A SIMPLE BUT STAGGERING ONE.
FOR AS THE PILOTLESS MOSQUITO LIFTED INTO THE AIR...

AIRBORNE AT LAST!
BUT I'D BETTER STAY HIDDEN
TILL THE LAST MOMENT OR
JERRY MIGHT SPOT ME!
KEEP IT UP, PROF-- YOU'RE
DOING FINE AT THE
CONTROLS!




DAREDEVIL MICK DIAMOND HAD STOWED AWAY ABOARD THE REMOTE-CONTROLLED MOSQUITO! AND NOW, WITH A DEADLY OBJECT IN VIEW, HE COOLLY ALLOWED THE AIRCRAFT TO FLY ITS CONTROLLED COURSE TOWARDS ENEMY TERRITORY.



TWENTY MILES FROM THE ALREADY SMOKE-SHROUDED BLOCKHOUSE TARGET, TWO JUNKERS 88 BOMBERS SIGHTED THE LONE MOSQUITO AND CLOSED FOR THE KILL. IN THE DORSAL TURRET A GUNNER RUBBED HIS HANDS IN EAGER ANTICIPATION...




BUT KEEN EYES WERE WATCHING THE GERMAN BOMBER. HIDDEN IN THE COCKPIT OF THE APPARENTLY DEFENCELESS BRITISH PLANE, A BURLY FIGURE FLEXED MUSCLES FOR ACTION. A HAND REACHED FOR A SWITCH ...



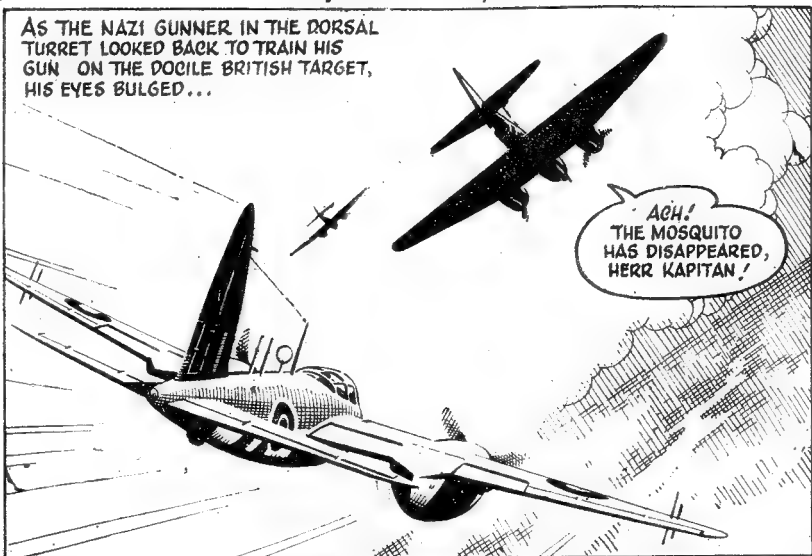
GOOD JOB I HAD TIME TO PUT AMMO IN THE GUNS BEFORE THEY OPENED UP THE HANGAR! WELL, PROF, THIS IS WHERE I TAKE OVER!

AS THE JUNKERS CHOSE ITS FIRING POSITION WITH UNHURRIED CONFIDENCE, SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND FLICKED THE REMOTE CONTROL SWITCH TO "OFF" AND CAUGHT THE MOSQUITO WITH STICK AND RUDDER. THE LITHE AIRCRAFT DIVED GENTLY UNDER HIS COOL HANDS.



I'VE GOT YOU, MY BEAUTY! NOW TO GIVE JERRY A 20mm SURPRISE!

AS THE NAZI GUNNER IN THE DORSAL TURRET LOOKED BACK TO TRAIN HIS GUN ON THE DOCILE BRITISH TARGET, HIS EYES BULGED...

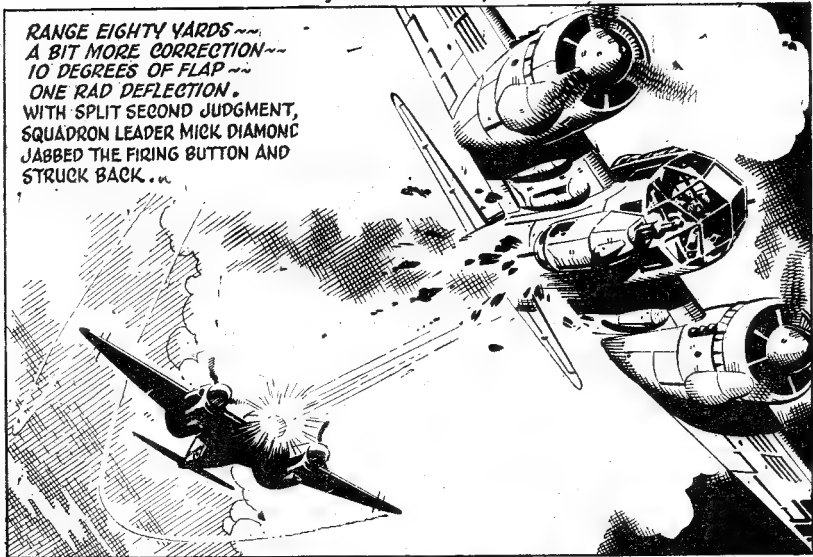


MICK'S SWIFT MANOEUVRE HAD BAFFLED THE GERMANS. HIDDEN UNDER THE BELLY OF THE JUNKERS 88, HE PULLED BACK THE STICK TO BRING THE MOSQUITO'S NOSE SHARPLY UP IN LINE WITH THE BOMBER DIRECTLY ABOVE.

THAT'S GOT YOU WORRIED, SQUAREHEADS. AND THIS IS GOING TO SHATTER YOU! CANNON SIGHTS ON!



RANGE EIGHTY YARDS...
A BIT MORE CORRECTION...
10 DEGREES OF FLAP...
ONE RAD DEFLECTION.
WITH SPLIT SECOND JUDGMENT,
SQUADRON LEADER MICK DIAMOND
JABBED THE FIRING BUTTON AND
STRUCK BACK...



THE HAIL OF 20mm CANNON SHELLS CLAWED
OPEN THE GREY BELLY OF THE JUNKERS 88.
IN THAT STAGGERING MOMENT, THE GERMAN
CREW LEARNED THAT THE AIRCRAFT THEY
HAD SNEERED AT HAD A LETHAL STING
IN ITS NOSE.



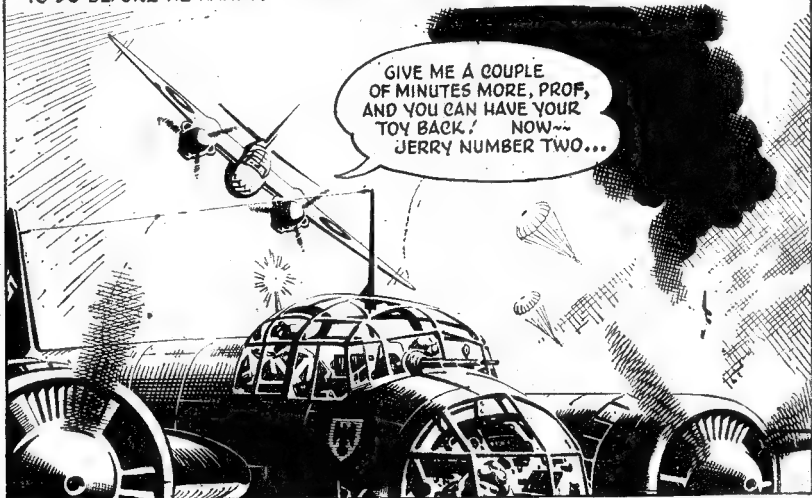
A MAN, COOL AND COURAGEOUS, WAS AT THE CONTROLS OF THAT DEADLY FIGHTER-BOMBER. AND THE SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS FROM WHICH HE HAD TAKEN OVER CONTROL WERE CAUSING DEEP CONCERN A HUNDRED MILES AWAY...

WELL? WHAT'S HAPPENED THIS TIME?



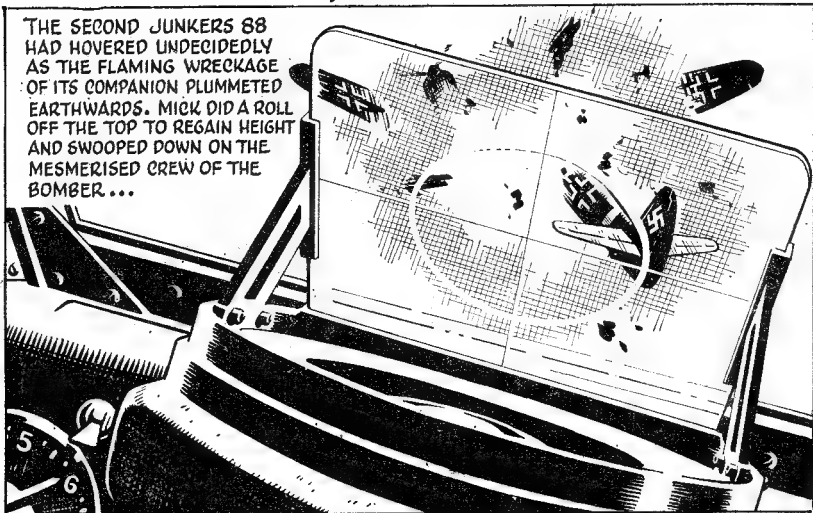
OH DEAR! THE AIRCRAFT IS BEHAVING MOST IMPROPERLY, GROUP CAPTAIN! I WILL TRY TO GET IT UNDER CONTROL!

THEODORE CLEGG WAS ALMOST IN TEARS. DESPERATELY HE TWIDDLLED THE KNOBS OF HIS BELOVED INVENTION. BUT MICK DIAMOND HAD ONE MORE JOB TO DO BEFORE HE HANDED OVER CONTROL AGAIN AND TOOK A BACK SEAT.



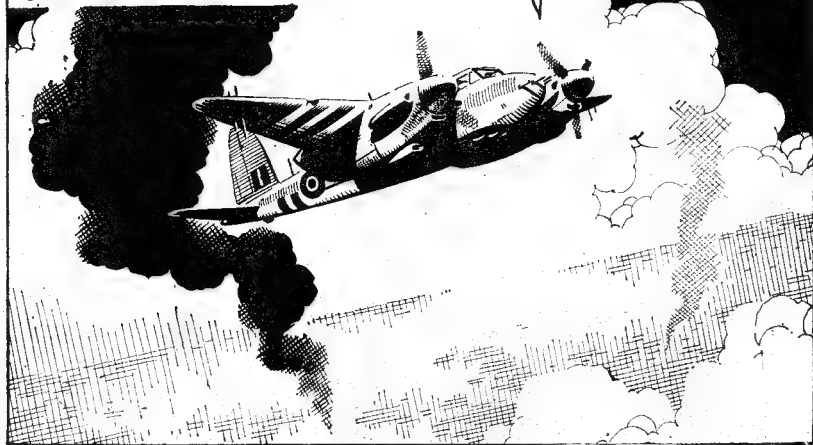
GIVE ME A COUPLE OF MINUTES MORE, PROF, AND YOU CAN HAVE YOUR TOY BACK! NOW~ JERRY NUMBER TWO...

THE SECOND JUNKERS 88 HAD HOVERED UNDECIDEDLY AS THE FLAMING WRECKAGE OF ITS COMPANION PLUMMETED EARTHWARDS. MICK DID A ROLL OFF THE TOP TO REGAIN HEIGHT AND SWOOPED DOWN ON THE MESMERISED CREW OF THE BOMBER...



THE SECOND BOMBER JOINED THE FIRST AS A SHATTERED HEAP OF METAL IN THE SCARRED FIELDS OF FRANCE. AND HIGH ABOVE, THE MAN WHO HAD SAVED THE PILOTLESS PLANE FROM A SIMILAR FATE GRINNED COOLLY AND FLICKED OVER A SWITCH TO "ON".

I'VE DONE MY BIT, PROF,
IT'S ALL YOURS NOW--AND
I HOPE TO HEAVEN YOU'RE
STILL AT THOSE INSTRUMENTS
OF YOURS!



A HUNDRED MILES AWAY ON A LINCOLNSHIRE AIRFIELD, A BOFFIN SMILED COMPLACENTLY.

AH, GROUP CAPTAIN, EVERYTHING IS UNDER CONTROL AGAIN! ON COURSE, TARGET FIVE MILES AHEAD! SOME LITTLE TURBULENCE IN THE AIR NO DOUBT RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT-ER, REGRETTABLE OCCURENCE!

PHEW! WHATEVER YOU SAY, MR CLEGG!

STEADILY THE MOSQUITO DRONED ON, AGAIN UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE DISTANT SCIENTIST. SOON THE VITAL TARGET, HIDDEN BY ITS FAMILIAR SMOKE SCREEN, CAME INTO VIEW BELOW. MICK STRETCHED LUXURIOUSLY.

WELL, HERE WE ARE OVER THE TARGET AGAIN! IT'S NICE TO HAVE NOTHING TO DO FOR A CHANGE. I'VE GIVEN THE PROF HIS CHANCE-- LET'S HOPE HE MAKES THE BEST OF IT!

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TWO GUARDING JUNKERS 88 HAD TAKEN THE GERMAN DEFENCES BY SURPRISE. THERE WAS LITTLE FLAK. THIS TIME, THEODORE OLEGG HAD A GOLDEN CHANCE TO PIERCE THAT WALL OF SMOKE WITH THE MOSQUITO'S TWO-TON BOMB.



COMPUTED ON THE PRECISE DIALS OF THE CONTROL PANEL IN THE VAN--AND ACTIVATED BY AN EXCITED JAB OF THE BOFFIN'S FINGER, THE BOMB FELL...



GATHERING SPEED AS IT PLUNGED EARTHWARDS, THE TWO TONS OF HIGH EXPLOSIVE KNIFED THROUGH THE SMOKE SCREEN WITH UNCANNY ACCURACY...



TWO THOUSAND FEET ABOVE, AS THE MOSQUITO BANKED AWAY UNDER RADIO CONTROL, MICK LOOKED DOWN AND SAW, WITH A STRANGE EXCITEMENT, THAT WHERE THE BLOCKHOUSE HAD BEEN THERE WAS NOW A RAW AND JAGGED HOLE.



THE MISSION HAD BEEN COMPLETED. FOR MONTHS, NO MORE GUIDED ROCKETS WOULD FALL ON LONDON. THE NERVE CENTRE OF THOSE FIENDISH WEAPONS HAD BEEN SMASHED BY AN OBSCURE SCIENTIST~~ AND A STOWAWAY!

YOU'RE VERY
SURE OF YOURSELF,
MR CLEGG!

NOT OF MYSELF,
GROUP CAPTAIN~~
OF MY INSTRUMENTS!
I ASSURE YOU THAT
THE BLOCKHOUSE HAS
BEEN DESTROYED!





BEWILDERED, THE BOFFIN GAVE UP THE UNEQUAL STRUGGLE WITH HIS KNOBS AND WENT TO THE DOOR OF THE VAN. AS THE MOSQUITO SWEEPED IN OVER THE AIRFIELD, HIS EYES POPPED AND HIS JAW SAGGED.

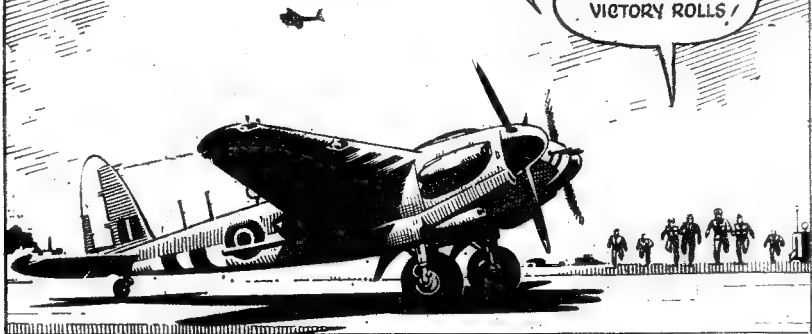


PANDEMONIUM BROKE OUT AS THE APPARENTLY PILOTLESS AIRCRAFT ROARED ACROSS THE AIRFIELD IN A HAIR-RAISING VICTORY ROLL. AND AS IT TOUCHED DOWN...

IT'S EMPTY!

IT CAN'T BE!

GREMLING CAN'T DO VICTORY ROLLS!



BEWILDERED AND EXCITED, THE CROWD SWARMED AROUND THE STATIONARY MOSQUITO -- AND SUDDENLY THE COCKPIT WAS THRUST OPEN BY A MUSCULAR ARM...

HALLO, CHAPS!
WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS
ABOUT? ALL I BAGGED
WAS A COUPLE OF
JU 88s!

OH MY STARS!
I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN
IT! SO THAT WAS WHY MY
INSTRUMENTS MISBEHAVED
THEMSELVES!



THE PROF STARED AT THE GRINNING FIGURE IN THE COCKPIT AS THOUGH THE BURLY MICK DIAMOND WERE AN APPARITION.

'THAT'S IT, PROF.' I TOOK OVER FOR A MINUTE OR TWO TO CLEAR THE SKY OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT FOR YOU AND YOUR INSTRUMENTS. AND I MUST SAY YOU Clobbered THAT BLOCKHOUSE BEAUTIFULLY BETWEEN YOU!

BUT IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOU, MICK,...



IT WOULD NO LONGER BE BLIND FLYING FOR THE BOFFIN AND THE PATHFINDER ACE. THEY BOTH KNEW WHERE THEY WERE GOING NOW!

I GUESS WE BOTH NEED EACH OTHER, PROF.' IT'S YOUR SORT OF CRAZY IDEA AND MY SORT OF CRAZY FLYING WHICH WINS WARS!

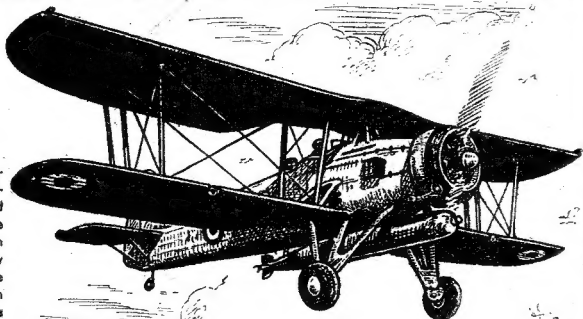


FAMOUS FIGHTING PLANES

TWO AIRCRAFT WHICH WON FAME OVER THE HIGH SEAS

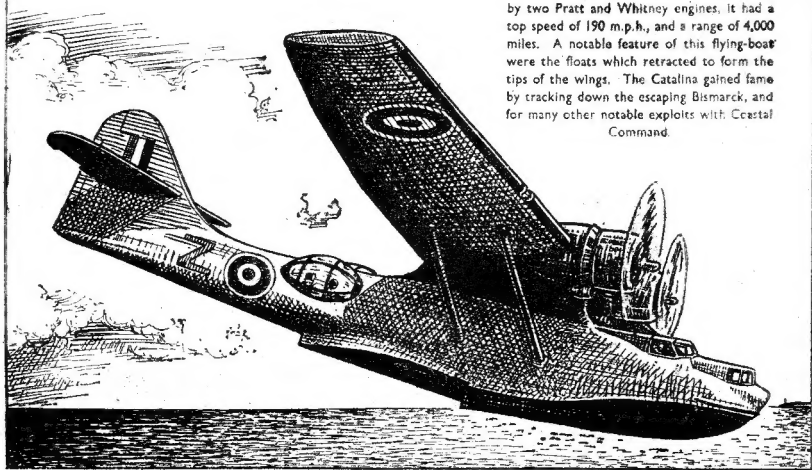
FAIREY SWORDFISH

Affectionately nicknamed "String-bag," the Swordfish looks old-fashioned, but had a war record second to none. It joined the Fleet Air Arm in 1935, and although its speed was much less than enemy fighters it could out-maneuvre them and press home an attack with a bomb load half as much again as the Blenheim. Swordfish aircraft crippled the Italian Fleet at Taranto and torpedoed the German battleship Bismarck, among other great feats. It carried one 18-inch torpedo, or six 250 lb. bombs.



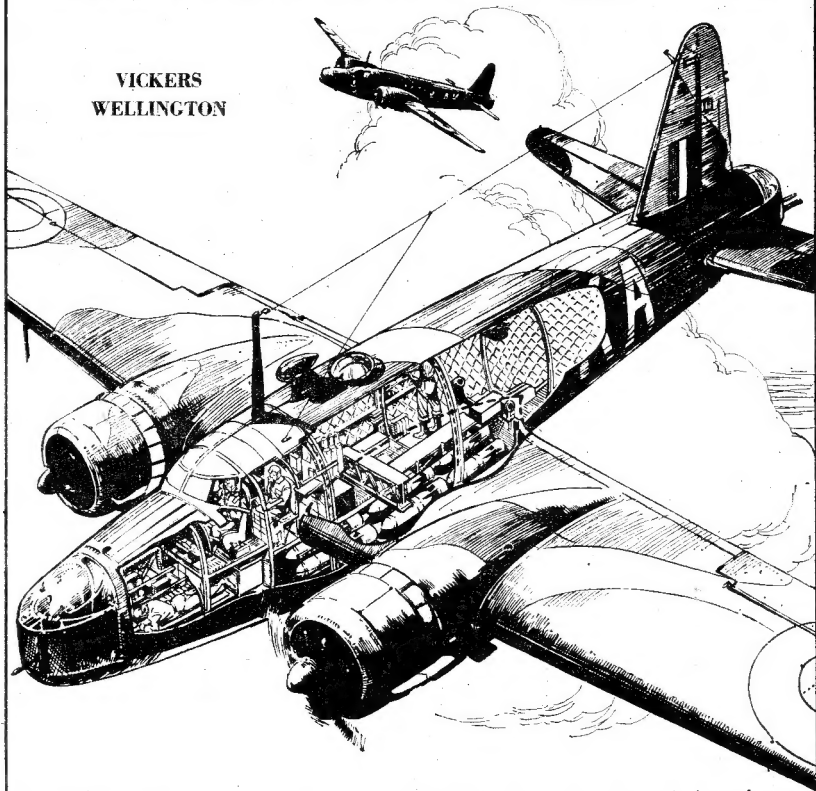
CONSOLIDATED CATALINA (Below)

Of American origin, the Catalina went into service with the R.A.F. in 1939 and built up a brilliant record of achievement. Powered by two Pratt and Whitney engines, it had a top speed of 190 m.p.h., and a range of 4,000 miles. A notable feature of this flying-boat were the floats which retracted to form the tips of the wings. The Catalina gained fame by tracking down the escaping Bismarck, and for many other notable exploits with Coastal Command.



BOMBER — AND MAID OF ALL WORK

VICKERS
WELLINGTON



This sturdy, twin-engined aircraft formed a major part of the Royal Air Force bomber strength in 1939-41. More of them were built than of any other bomber—a grand total of 11,461. It was the first plane to bomb Berlin—in August, 1940—and the first to carry the 4,000 lb. blockbuster bomb. Torpedo-carrying Wellingtons played a large part in the defeat of Rommel in Africa by sinking many supply ships. The Wellington laid mines, escorted convoys and transported urgently needed supplies. The crew of six manned eight machine-guns, two in the nose, four in the tail and one on each side of the fuselage. One thousand six hundred and fifty h.p. engines gave them a maximum speed of 255 m.p.h. and they could carry two tons of bombs.

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